

Ballet Photographs

by Hugh P. Hall

WITHDRAWN

Ballet Photographs

by Hugh Mitchell

BALLET FROM PAVLOVA TO RAMBERT

BALLET IN AUSTRALIA

FROM PAVLOVA TO RAMBERT

PHOTOGRAPHS & COMMENTARY

BY

HUGH P. HALL

Georgian House

Melbourne

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INTRODUCTION

IN publishing this book, I would like to state at the outset that these photographs are not intended to be masterpieces of photography. They have been taken purely as records of ballet, although I have always striven to get the best and most artistic results possible under the circumstances. The conditions encountered in theatre photography are exasperating at all times and so very different from those of a studio, where the photographer is at leisure as a rule to arrange every detail of position and lighting, etc., in his own time, to his own satisfaction, before taking a picture. In theatre action-photography, on the other hand, one has little choice of the position from which to work, and is forced to use the ever-changing and often insufficient lighting as presented on the stage at the moment, and to manipulate the camera hurriedly in almost complete darkness. All preparations having been correctly made under these difficulties, it is still always a matter of a split second whether one catches or misses an effective group or beautiful pose before it passes beyond recall.

However, allowing for the difficulties, the theatre action-photographer will find in ballet great opportunity for the recording of beauty. There on the stage before him is a changing pageant, the flow of the poetry of motion as one group melts into the next, and the story or interpretation is unfolded. His job, it seems to me, is to catch this flow at its peak, as it were, just at the moment of poise. This has been my aim at any rate, in action-photography, rather than to make the camera crystallize the maximum amount of movement without much regard to composition; such action is usually captured when the dancers, or some of them, are in freak positions after breaking from one group and before reaching the next point of poise or accent.

David Lichine, when studying some of my photographs, said, "You know the moment when to take them, and very few photographers in the world seem to know that." He seemed to mean it quite sincerely; in fact, it was Lichine's enthusiasm which encouraged me at the time to take many more photographs than I would otherwise have done.

My endeavour has been to obtain comprehensive impressions of the complete stories or themes of most of the ballets which have been presented by the various companies in Melbourne.

My collection, which Lichine thought was probably one of the largest of its kind in the world, now amounts to thousands of photographs. Sevastianov, Baronova's husband, told me that in his opinion I had few if any rivals in the world of action-photography.

It would be impossible to present my collection within the covers of a book many times the size of this. Nevertheless this book contains selections from nearly all ballets and seasons seen in Melbourne from 1926 to date. It is intended to be in the nature of a forerunner, because later I hope to publish a series of small books, each one devoted to a single ballet, or in the case of short ballets, probably two or three. The sets from which I have to select range from six to one hundred or more prints according to the type of ballet.

As you turn the pages I hope they will recall to you happy memories of some of the lovely and inspired moments which you have experienced while watching ballet.

They will take you in chronological order from the 1926 and 1929 seasons of Pavlova through the 1936-1937, the 1938-1939 and the 1939-1940 seasons of Colonel de Basil's companies, to the performances of the Borovansky, Kirsova and Rambert companies, for this book is in the nature of a cavalcade of ballet.

So from my records of those seasons I have selected the artistic highlights and will now recall the main impressions and events which have led to the publishing of this book.

I commenced action-photography as a hobby just over twenty years ago, in 1926, the year when the immortal Pavlova first visited Melbourne. Inspired by the exquisite beauty of her dancing, I armed myself with the 'reflex' camera which I then owned. (Compared with the modern miniature camera it was a very big and clumsy apparatus for the purpose.) Timidly I erected it on a tripod in the front of the dress circle, and then was panic stricken! I dared not press the trigger, so let many opportunities slip by. Then I dared! — the shutter went off with a bang which sounded terrific in the hushed silence of the theatre — a most dramatic silence it was, such as only an inspired artist like Pavlova could command in a theatre packed with a spell-bound audience! I shrank into as small a space as I could, fearing a heavy hand on my shoulder at any moment and an order "Come to the office." Perhaps the bang was not so loud as I had thought. I was unmolested; so I braved several more attempts, and was rewarded with one successful photograph taken during THE DANCE OF THE HOURS, which Pavlova danced with Novikoff. This photograph is the first one I have selected for reproduction.

When Pavlova returned in 1929, I made more attempts and secured several successful photographs of CHOPINIANA, LA FILLE MAL-GARDÉE and AUTUMN LEAVES. Although not up to the technical standard possible today these photographs are I think of sufficient interest to be included.

Anton Dolin was most delighted with these early photographs, the perfection of poise of the very great artist being, he said, so apparent in them. Later, too, Lichine was quite excited to find among these a photograph of his great friend Vladimiroff — dancing with Pavlova. Saying that there were few, if any, photographic records of this event in existence, he was thrilled to get a copy which he wished to put in a museum.

The nervous strain of taking photographs with that very noisy awkward camera prevented me from attempting more at that time; but, when the tragic news of Pavlova's death was announced the following year, I deeply regretted that I had not taken many more.

These early photographs do not compare technically with those taken during later seasons. This is due mainly to the advance made in the speed of photographic films. But to me, they are nevertheless precious souvenirs, little gems of memory of the first ballets I saw, and with which I was enchanted.

I regret that I did not photograph the Monte Carlo Ballet Russe when it came to Melbourne in 1934.

During the memorable season in 1936-1937, Kirsova, Yousskevitch, Woizikowski, Blinova, Tchinarova, Guerard, Froman and others thrilled Melbourne. This company brought ballets such as AURORA'S WEDDING, LES SYLPHIDES, SWAN LAKE, LES PRESAGES and others, which, although already famous overseas, were all new to us.

I bought a new camera, choosing one with the quietest

shutter-action possible. I have always used it inside a bag to minimise the sound—with the result that few, if any, of the audience (even those in the seats next to me) realized that I was taking photographs throughout the performance. As my work became known, I was unfortunately sometimes blamed for the loud clicks that were occasionally heard from noisy cameras in other parts of the theatre.

However, knowing that my work was not annoying others, I continued securing photographs frequently, and soon became interested in trying to obtain sequences of photographs recording all important parts of the story of each ballet, and all the good groupings possible.

Some of the photographs taken during this season, particularly those of LES PRESAGES, still renew some of my happiest memories of Russian ballet. The first performance I saw by this company of LES PRESAGES, my initial experience of symphonic ballet, remains a delightful memory. In my opinion, the performances given by Kirsova as Passion, Yousskevitch as the Hero, Tchinarova as Action and Woizikowski as Fate, have never been surpassed here, although the stars of later companies may have gained more fame abroad, or even created the parts. I think also that Roland Guerard's performance as Bluebird in AURORA'S WEDDING has set a standard here that has not since been equalled.

The path of the action-photographer is not an easy one, a camera usually being looked on as a trespasser in the theatre. I was fortunate, however, in being granted official permission to use my camera, so during the 1938-39 season I was constantly at work building up my collection. When the 1939-40 season began, I again obtained official permission to take photographs. I took a series of the new ballet PAGANINI which was included in the first week's programme, and which proved to be a wonderful ballet for photography. When I showed the results to Lichine one evening after the performance, he was so enthusiastic that he at once rushed me to Colonel de Basil. Thereafter, they were both very appreciative and helpful. They gave me many opportunities to complete the sets I had commenced, sometimes making the box available for closer shots. I have found however that, for a continuous series, the front of the dress circle is the ideal position.

As one becomes familiar with the ballets, one watches for certain groups, and for thrilling or artistic moments. To obtain many particular photographs (as for instance, the leap in COQ D'OR shown on Page 113) I made special trips to the theatre.

I remember that Lichine was very pleased with my set of the ballet L'APRES-MIDI D'UN FAUNE (created by Nijinski to music of Debussy) in which Lichine himself gave such a wonderful performance. The complete set of this is most effective, all the positions of the faune and the nymphs being in profile, inspired by the Greek frieze. The effect in the photographs is quite sculpturesque like a series of figures in bas-relief.

In my collection I have used colour-toning for certain sets of photographs to give atmospheric effect, and also to avoid the monotony that would result if all were in black and white. I have asked the publishers to reproduce similar colours in this book, for instance a blue-green which seems to naturally suggest itself for LES SYLPHIDES, whilst a red

is used for SCHEHERAZADE and so on. For the FAUNE set I used a brownish-purple tone which Lichine thought most effective. I well remember the night when he was quite excited at the effect of these and took me to his dressing-room, where he pored over them with great enthusiasm.

In ballet photography, not the least interesting part is the contact with the dancers themselves and the world behind the scenes—for it is indeed a world of its own. The glamour of ballet from the front of the house is very strong, but there is an added fascination when one catches glimpses and impressions backstage. (Of course there are some startling disillusionments too, but I am not telling about those!) There is certainly a fascination about the dressing-room of a prima ballerina or leading male dancer. Although it is lit with hard bright lighting, the confusion of all the bits and pieces of costumes from the various classic and other ballets gives a glamorous effect which is intriguing. Perhaps one will see the golden wig of the FAUNE, the blue satin jewel-studded jacket of BLUEBIRD, or the diamond-patterned tights worn by Harlequin in CARNAVAL (all works of art in themselves) and, of course, the inevitable mirror and table of make-up materials. To one of the prima ballerinas I had given a statuette which I had modelled, and this I noticed being used, with scant respect, as a hat-stand for the feathered head-dress of FIRE-BIRD!

In the corridors and in the wings one sees dancers, dressed as all sorts of characters or wandering about in various stages of dress or undress, preparing for or returning from the ballets of the evening.

Backstage, one will see, maybe, a slave from PRINCE IGOR conversing with a sylphide, or a group of little swans mingling with Russian peasants from PETROUSHKA; and in the wings there are always dancers practising, practising, practising, warming-up and preparing for the performance.

Before the curtain goes up, the stage itself is almost invariably crowded with people—dancers in all types of costumes practising, carpenters, electricians, perhaps the manager himself and a few privileged visitors all talking—even during the playing of the overture. One would think that they must be caught thus at the rise of the curtain, for they all seem so casual and unconcerned. But miraculously, when the curtain does go up, all but the dancers of the moment seem to have melted into thin air, apparently without signal, command or warning of any kind—and the ballet is on!

An instance of this sort of thing took place at the end of the ballet UNION PACIFIC. Those who saw it will remember the final tableau picturing the ceremony when the two sections of the transcontinental railway which have been built from either end meet in the middle. Two steam engines are moved in from the opposite wings and the officials celebrate; a camera man rushes up to photograph the scene and the curtain falls. I was standing in the wings near the footlights one night as this tableau was taking shape. The two engines had been drawn into place and the music seemed to be working up to the climax. Then suddenly in the gloom at the back of the stage proper I noticed the dancer who was to act photographer chatting unconcernedly with some other dancers. As the curtain seemed about to fall, he hurriedly put on his coat, then his wig, grabbed the tripod of the "property" camera and the black camera-cloth, and rushed past me on to the

stage. It seemed mere chance that he got there just at the right moment before the curtain-fall. Yet I think it was really no mere chance, but excellent timing, for competition is always keen among the dancers and this means that no dancer dare miss his or her cue for fear of being relegated to a smaller part. (I was interested to notice some time ago a reproduction in a newspaper of an old photograph taken at the actual completion of the railway which showed that the final tableau of this ballet, see photograph on page 99, was a very faithful representations of the historical scene on which it was based.)

A rehearsal with the dancers in black tights, coloured jumpers and headbands is also most interesting. I had the pleasure of watching some rehearsals of Lichine's GRADUATION BALL which had its premiére in Melbourne. (Of this ballet alone, I have a set of over 100 photographs.) The technical ability of Riabouchinska was remarkably demonstrated at rehearsals, for, as well as doing her own part, she was always ready and able to demonstrate a step or movement perfectly to other dancers who had not yet learned what was needed in their parts. It was also demonstrated by the spectacular leap in the circus scene in this ballet where she runs from the wings, and, although holding a parasol in one hand, takes a flying leap on to Lichine's shoulder — there striking the right attitude instantly, always with unerring precision. (See photograph reproduced on page 89.)

She would, in between times, pick up a ballet shoe and darn the toe. Such are the contrasts of the theatre! To the dancers, life is mainly hard work. They say that they seldom see a ballet from the front of the house.

In both 1939 and 1940, I held successful exhibitions at Mr. Sedon's gallery during the sojourn here of the ballet company. It was a hectic time. At least three nights a week, at the ballet securing shots, other nights enlarging, pressing, spotting, mounting, indexing, etc., till the early hours.

As photography was only a hobby, all this work had to be done in my spare time, quite apart from attending to the work of my profession each day.

On the opening day of the first exhibition, we arrived at the gallery in good time and waited for the many people invited to hear Anton Dolin, who was to open the show at 3 p.m. At 2.50 p.m. the big gallery was still empty except for the family. Imagine our dismay! The show was a "flop" surely! Then someone came panting up the stairway, having toiled up five flights, to tell us that the lift was not working because it was being serviced — most inconveniently, and a large crowd of people was waiting below. The situation was hurriedly reported, and in about ten minutes (which seemed hours) the lift worked again and all was well. So far as popularity was concerned, the show was undoubtedly a great success. In fact, Mr. Sedon stated that only on one occasion before had so many people flocked to an exhibition in his gallery, and the attraction that time was the world-famed artist Norman Lindsay!

The late Mr. R. H. Croll kindly introduced Anton Dolin, who spoke with quiet sincerity and great charm. I do not now remember much of what he said except that he thought the Pavlova photographs alone made the exhibition worth coming to see, and that the collection was especially interesting to the dancer because it afforded such an opportunity to study the effect of groups and positions as seen from the auditorium.

Dolin was most conscientious. On arrival in Melbourne from New Zealand he came immediately to see me at the gallery the same morning, and studied the photographs carefully for an hour or more to prepare himself properly for his job of officially opening the exhibition. He had to open another exhibition at 2.30 on the same afternoon, but nevertheless arrived at mine punctually at 3 o'clock without showing any signs of having hurried or being at all agitated. I felt that he carried it all out perfectly – as if to the manner born.

The second exhibition in 1940 was also a success. It was opened by David Lichine, who was introduced by Dr. J. Ringland Anderson, Colonel and Madame de Basil being guests of honour.

Financially, these exhibitions were not worth while because the expense and amount of work involved was enormous. In fact, to do so much work for such small return would from the material standpoint be ridiculous. But the experience was worth having because I made many good friends, and enjoyed the artistic aspect of the work. However, I doubt now whether I would ever again undertake another such exhibition.

Many of the dancers visited these exhibitions, amongst them Riabouchinska leading a huge dog. Although she was the central figure in countless photographs, she did not appear to trouble to look at them, being I think just too tired.

On one occasion when having lunch at the Essendon Aerodrome with Lichine and Riabouchinska I asked her what part she was taking at a charity performance in Sydney fixed for the following evening. She replied with a sigh, "Same old Sylphides and Bluebird." Such is a dancer's life! As their 'plane disappeared northwards carrying them on to Sydney, an old man at the aerodrome stopped me and said, "Say, mister, who were those two people you were talking to, the man with the long hair and his blonde friend?" "Oh, they were Lichine and Riabouchinska, the world-famous ballet dancers," I replied. "Umph! Thought they was something queer," he said. "Saw a ballet once meself. Friend took me, but never again. There they was flittin' about the stage, never spoke a blinkin' word all night! It was awful. The crowd was clappin' and yellin' but . . . beats me! Dunno what they saw in it." Although ballet has become so popular nowadays, there are still many people like him, to whom "ballet" means "boredom".

To return to Riabouchinska, she was a very charming and natural person to meet, and what a wonderful artist! I saw her backstage one night dressed for the principal part in CINDERELLA awaiting the rise of the curtain. Whilst speaking to her, I noticed that she had, without doubt, already assumed the character she was soon to portray in the ballet! She was childlike, lonely and simple and was already living the part of Cinderella.

I had several amusing encounters with members of these companies. For instance, one night I showed some photographs I had taken of her to a certain ballerina. She appeared very pleased with them judging by her expressions and exclamations in Russian or French or something. She answered several questions by a shake of the head as much as to say "non comprit". Yet some nights later I happened to be near her when she was speaking to some friends in the corridor of the theatre and I overheard her say in a good American film-star accent (in jocular vein), "I am hongry for keesses, I am

hongry for luv." Probably her "non comprit" pose I had encountered previously in her dressing-room was a useful barrier against strangers, and who could blame her !

Another prominent ballerina was very thrilled with my photographs and said so very expressively. She wanted a number of copies and quickly, and it was arranged that I was to bring them to the theatre the following week and send a message in to tell her that I was there. I did so at the appointed time. I waited; she did not appear, but 'Momma' arrived instead. When I explained the reason of my visit, she brusquely waved me away saying, "My daughter, she do not want any more photographs !" Needless to say I never showed her any more of mine after that.

Verchinina, with the most striking blonde hair and dark eyes, was an interesting personality. Her taste was of course for the modern style of dancing rather than the classical. She could entertain a roomful of people for a whole evening with the greatest ease — with talk of travel and people and her experiences in and out of ballet. Unlike many dancers, who, it is said, have few, if any, interests beyond ballet and knitting, Verchinina had a deep love for and knowledge of Eastern philosophy and poetry. Her interest in such books as "The Prophet" and "The Garden of the Prophet" by Kahlil Gibran revealed an essential recognition and love of beauty in its myriad forms and expressions.

Edouard Borovansky, now so well known in Melbourne, is also an excellent raconteur. He has an apparently inexhaustible stock of anecdotes about dancers and their behaviour and experiences, which he recounts in his own inimitable manner. At a rehearsal he can be scathing without giving offence. One night I arrived at his studio when a rehearsal was in full swing. Then a pupil, arriving late, tried to slip into her place unnoticed. "Stop ! Stop !" cried Borovansky to the pianist. All activity stopped as suddenly as it does in a factory at the first sound of the five o'clock whistle. "Why are you late Sonia?" roared Borovansky. "How can I carry on a rehearsal with one of my dancers missing? Can't you see everything is held up? What do you mean by it? At the end of this torrent of questions, all eyes were turned on poor Sonia. In a thin nervous voice she said, "I'm sorry, M'sieur." The scowl on Borovansky's face changed instantly to a broad beaming smile. "Ah well," he said, "that's different ! Quiet everybody ! Come on, we'll start again at 'Oomph, tiddle-y om, de da'. Ready!" Then the rehearsal was continued with enthusiasm as before.

I am afraid I was not very popular with some of the dancers. One day Colonel de Basil was looking at some of my photographs in his office when two young dancers knocked at the door. He immediately called them over, and pointing to certain photographs, rebuked them for incorrect positions caught by the camera.

Lisa Serova on the other hand was particularly delighted with a photograph which I had secured of her in PROTÉE. "Can I please have a copy — just a small one?" she pleaded. Referring to Lichine, who created this ballet, she said, "You see David says I never hold my leg straight in that position. But I am sure I do and that photograph proves it." She was most enthusiastic and encouraging about my work, and I think it was originally her suggestion that started the idea

that I should hold an exhibition. Serova was an English girl, married to a Mr. Ganf, a Pole. They were a charming couple. I heard that as a member of the Polish army he had a nightmare journey escaping from Europe back to England after the collapse of France. I have often wondered whether they survived the conflagration of the war.

Lichine found my photographs of value to him for recalling positions and groupings in his ballet PROTÉE, all of which he could not remember in detail. He accepted a complete set of it. He was also particularly interested in my series of photographs of CENDRILLON and I gave him a complete set which he wished to present to d'Erlanger, the composer of the music for that ballet.

In the latter part of this book I am including photographs of ballets performed by the Borovansky and Kirsova companies, both of which have, I think, done some fine work. Borovansky seems to have a definite flair for creating groupings of dancers in what might be termed the symphonic style; that is to say, a particular quality of grouping co-ordinating with or reflecting the quality of music being interpreted. This particular feature of choreography was brought to perfection by Massine in his great symphonic ballets. Borovansky studied under Massine of course, nevertheless his gift in this direction has, I think, its own distinct individuality. I have not secured so many photographs of Kirsova's company because it is domiciled in Sydney; nor have I included many photographs of her company here because many of them appear in her own recent publication. Sydney has indeed been fortunate to have had Kirsova with her great artistry and experience as a ballerina, as a teacher of Russian classical ballet. The tour by the Monte Carlo Company in 1936-1937 became a personal triumph for her as the prima ballerina.

The last section is devoted to the company founded and directed by Madame Rambert, the first to visit Australia from overseas since the early years of the war. Melbourne ballet-lovers have shown their great appreciation of the work of this company by their enthusiastic support during its record run at the Princess Theatre.

After the first night's performance I, with a few friends, met Madame Rambert on the stage, and to our great surprise she almost immediately performed a series of "cartwheels" for our private entertainment; but it was learned later that she does this for anyone anywhere, and without any provocation whatsoever !

Although we knew that this was a company composed entirely of English dancers, it did, in fact, seem surprising when we heard them speak perfect English — previous companies having been composed of dancers of so many different nationalities, many of whom had little knowledge of English.

Madame Rambert is of course world-famed for her magnificent work in training and establishing many English dancers and proving to the world that they can equal the dancers of any other nationality in technique, mime, temperament and artistry.

Lightness, amazing elevation and smoothness of action (no doubt the results of Madame's training) were the great features of the work of this company.

Looking back over the season recently concluded, I feel that in the art of dancing and mime and in some examples of décor and costumes this company has come well up to the

standard of the Russian ballet companies that have visited us —but that it has not done so in choreography and production.

Grandeur such as that produced in the spectacle of AURORA'S WEDDING and LE COQ D'OR was never attained, nor were there any ballets comparable—in breadth of vision and co-relation of the Arts—with Massine's symphonic ballets. But should one make such comparisons? After all, it is an English company and, as such, one must I suppose expect it to be reserved or conservative compared with the others. Stars were, I think purposely, not pushed forward and glamorized in the Hollywood manner, but instead the many brilliant dancers worked as a team and preferred to do so.

At all events, Melbourne has been most grateful for the feast of ballet that this company has brought to us.

In conclusion I would say that as Ballet involves the co-relation of the Arts, I wish that I could, in some way, include selections of appropriate music in this book. However as that is an impossible dream I hope that these photographs will help to recall to ballet-lovers the thrill of anticipation experienced as the lovely music of Chopin commences to carry one through the exquisite dream-world of Fokine's LES SYLPHIDES, or as the sparkling grandeur of Tchaikovsky's music prepares one for AURORA'S WEDDING, or as the shimmering atmosphere created by Debussy's music wafts one into that strange and fascinating world that is Lichine's PROTÉE —or yet again as the stirring opening of Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony rouses one for Massine's great work LES PRESAGES.

Ballet-lovers could no doubt go on adding to the list of such memories indefinitely, according to individual taste—for the delights of ballet are many and various. Ballet cannot be always with us—but we have had some wonderful seasons of it—and this book should revive many half-forgotten memories of those we have enjoyed. The other small books intended to follow should do the same thing in greater detail—one or two ballets at a time.

In the text presented with the photographs on the following pages, I have continued the idea of giving my impressions, because the actual stories of the various ballets may be found in many books, and are already too well known to ballet-lovers to need repetition here.

My impressions may help to recall to you the spirit of the performances or the highlights, thoughts, feelings, qualities and happy memories evoked by them. At any rate I hope that they will recapture and convey something of the fleeting and elusive beauty of the dance in its passage through Melbourne during the last twenty years.

For the interest of photographers, I would add that all these photographs, with the few exceptions mentioned earlier, were taken with a miniature camera from the auditorium, during the actual public performances of ballet and with ordinary stage lighting. Kodak Super XX or Ilford H.P.2 films were used with a lens set at F2.

Finally, I wish to thank Mr. E. C. Harris, of Georgian House, Mr. R. P. Morris, Mr. J. Keenes and Staff of Morris & Walker Pty. Ltd., Mr. C. Watson and Staff of Photoplates Pty. Ltd., for their enthusiasm, enterprise and tireless efforts to ensure the best production of this book possible in these most difficult times.

HUGH P. HALL.

1 St. Georges Road,
Elsternwick.
July 1948.

THE IMMORTAL PAVLOVA

Her inexpressible charm, the poetry of her movements, her lightness – as if she danced in a whisper, her subtle spirituality, the feeling of ethereality that emanated from her! It is impossible to describe or tabulate all the qualities and attributes of this consummate artist.

However, the photographs on the following three pages may serve to recall, to those who were privileged to see her, memories of the immortal Pavlova.

An interesting point of contrast between Pavlova's Company and those which subsequently visited Australia, is the way in which hers was formed around one brilliant central star with satellites, whereas the later companies included a galaxy of stars with no particular one shining out in such magnitude.

This shows the trend of the evolution of ballet from the idea of one very great artist with the company mainly as a setting, to the idea of a large group of very talented dancers co-operating to produce great works of art of a new type, such as the symphonic ballets.



THE DANCE OF THE HOURS (1926)

Here, we see Pavlova and Novikoff in this short ballet, in which each Hour in turn has its fling, as it were, and then dies to make way for the ensuing one.

Pavlova, in the leading rôle, wore a tu-tu of lovely rich crimson tulle sprinkled with brilliants which caught the light as she danced. The effect was charming.



PAVLOVA AND VLADIMIROFF IN
LA FILLE MAL-GARDÉE (1929)

This ballet had a simple, almost hackneyed, story of a peasant girl forced to forsake her lover for a rich Count.

But the story was of little importance. Just look at the perfection of Pavlova's arabesque in this photograph shown *at left*!

AUTUMN LEAVES (1929). (See also pages 179, 180)

A ballet composed by Pavlova herself, on the same theme as that used by Borovansky recently in his ballet of the same name.

Pavlova took the part of the Chrysanthemum, and Aubrey Hitchens, the North Wind.

The photograph *at right* shows the corps de ballet in a lovely setting.





CHOPINIANA (1929)

Here, *at left and below*, are two photographs of Pavlova with Vladimiroff and Company in CHOPINIANA.

This ballet, inspired by the music of Chopin, was similar to the well-known LES SYLPHIDES created by Fokine, although in Pavlova's version the choreography was slightly different, and two male dancers took part in it, instead of only one.

The setting was lovely – a quiet moonlit glade amid giant forest trees. The soft blue-green phosphorescent lighting was so diffused that one was unable to focus clearly, or to recognise, the dancers taking part, – thus giving the effect of their being in an ethereal realm entirely their own. One scarcely dared to breathe for fear they would all disappear, never to be seen again.

In this ballet, Pavlova showed her amazing artistry to the full – her movements being so silent, so graceful, and so full of poetry.



MELBOURNE 1936–1937
COLONEL W. DE BASIL'S
MONTE CARLO RUSSIAN BALLET COMPANY

Principal Dancers:

Leon Woizikowsky
Helene Kirsova
Valentina Blinova
Tamara Tchinarova
Nathalie Branitzka
Nina Youchkevitch
Nina Raievska
Igor Yousskevitch
Roland Guerard
Valentin Froman
Thadee Slavinsky

This company was led by Leon Woizikowsky, whose sense of rhythm was outstanding.

Whereas Pavlova's company was built around the one central star of great magnitude, this company was built around a cluster of stars, not of such great magnitude perhaps, but very brilliant nevertheless. Woizikowsky, Kirsova, Yousskevitch, Tchinarova, and Guerard were a splendid team, with many others coming quite close to them in accomplishment.

It was remarkable how the individualities of these fine dancers stood out as the season progressed.

MONTE CARLO RUSSIAN BALLET COMPANY

REPERTOIRE

Ballet	Choreographer	Music	Décor and Costumes	Photographs on Page—
Aurora's Wedding	Petipa	Tchaikowsky	Bakst and Benois	24-25
Beau Danube	Massine	Strauss	Folunin, after Constantin Guys	48
Boutique Fantasque	Massine	Rossini	Andre Derain	45-47
Carnaval	Fokine	Schumann	Bakst	40-41
Contes Russe	Massine	Liadoff	Larionoff	50
Cotillon	Balanchine	Chabrier	Berard	43
Fire Bird	Fokine	Stravinsky	Gontcharova	28-29
Hundred Kisses	Nijinska	D'erlanger	Hugo	36-37
L'amour Sorcier	Woizikowsky	de Falla	Gontcharova	—
L'apres midi d'un Faune	Nijinsky	Debussy	Prince A. Schervachidze	—
Midnight Sun	Massine	Rimsky-Korsakov	Larionoff	—
Petrouchka	Fokine	Stravinsky	Benois	42
Port Said	Woizikowsky	Konstantinoff	Larionoff	51
Presages	Massine	Tchaikowsky	Masson	30-38
Prince Igor	Fokine	Borodin	Korovine	51
Scheherazade	Fokine	Rimsky-Korsakov	Bakst	38-39
Scuola di Ballo	Massine	Boccherini	de Beaumont	44
Spectre de la Rose	Fokine	Weber-Berlioz	Bakst	44
Swan Lake	Petipa	Tchaikowsky	Prince Schervachidze	26-27
Sylphides	Fokine	Chopin	—	22-23
Thamar	Fokine	Balakireff	Bakst	49



LES SYLPHIDES (See also pages 54-61, 165, 191, and 209)

This spontaneous flash of genius by Fokine is ever-satisfying, no matter how often seen, though the lighting used on this and later occasions did not seem atmospheric enough to give the delightful "other-world" effect Pavlova attained in her CHOPINIANA. This gem reveals the classic poetry of the dance in its purest form.

In the two photographs *on this page,* we see Kirsova with Yousskevitch, an ideal pair in this ballet.



LES SYLPHIDES (continued)

In the picture *at right* we see Natalie Branitzka in the Prelude.





At left are Roland Guerard with Valentina Blinova and Nina Golovina in the principal parts, while the other Sylphides form an effective semi-circle in the background.



In these two photographs Valentina Blinova and Nina Youchkevitch respectively are seen in the rôle of Aurora with Valentin Froman as the Prince.

AURORA'S WEDDING (See also pages 62-65)

The opening prelude of Tchaikowsky's music for this ballet, with its infectious rhythm, always arousing a feeling of delightful anticipation for the brilliant glittering scenes to follow.





AURORA'S WEDDING (continued)

At left, Roland Guerard as Blue Bird. He was amazingly light. He gave the impression of being able to dance this exacting rôle with effortless ease. His diagonal passage across the stage was truly like that of a bird in flight, and his costume for the part was a delight too—more intensely blue than others seen since. At the conclusion of this item, he always received tremendous well-earned applause, and as he came forward to acknowledge it, he stood at the footlights elated, as if drinking in the acclamation.

Kirsova, youthful and gay-looking, was a splendid partner for him. They made one believe that they were enjoying themselves as much as anyone in the theatre.





SWAN LAKE (See also pages 92-95 and 209)

Tchaikowsky's well-known music for this ballet has a lovely freshness and an essentially balletic quality – rich, luscious, and lyrical, with a never-failing appeal.

In the two pictures *at left and below*, Valentina Blinova and Valentin Froman are seen in the leading rôles, which they danced with distinction.

On the opposite page Kirsova and Yousskevitch are seen in the beautiful love-duet. Yousskevitch looked romantic enough to turn any maiden's heart, whilst Kirsova's interpretation was full of charm, and had a deeper romantic quality than is usually portrayed in this classic rôle.





FIREBIRD (See also pages 124-126)

A Russian fairy-tale, gorgeous settings and fascinating music make up this splendid ballet.

At right and below Valentina Blinova is seen as Firebird with Valentin Froman as the Prince.





At right Kirsova is in the leading rôle. Note the richness of the back-cloth by Bakst.





LES PRESAGES (See also pages 100-105)

This was the first of Massine's symphonic ballets performed in Melbourne. A new art-form was revealed to us, and what a stirring experience it was !

The fine music of Tchaikowsky's Fifth Symphony was translated into colour and lyric movement with such genius that interest was wonderfully sustained throughout the whole of this long composition.

Tchinarova is shown in *these two photographs* as Action. Her dark hair, flashing eyes, and strong sense of rhythm, her movements so angular, powerful and compelling, produced a most dramatic effect — to me the strongest interpretation of this rôle yet seen here.





LES PRESAGES (continued)

At left is Tchinarova's dramatic exit at the end of the first movement. This was always superlatively done by her.

Here *at right* we see the entrance of The Lovers, at the beginning of the second movement, to the strains of the lovely andante.

When Kirsova and Yousskevitch took the leading rôles (as shown), they invariably caused a ripple of delight throughout the whole audience.

In the part of Passion, Kirsova seemed to move the audience profoundly, through her own realisation of the emotional intensity of this ballet.







LES PRESAGES (continued)

On opposite page and at left are The Lovers dancing happily through life together, vividly depicting the mood of this harmonious and luscious part of the symphony.

Now, Fate (Woizikowsky) has entered, first disturbing, then tearing the Lovers apart, and finally forcing them to dance to his harsh macabre tune. Woizikowsky's impeccable sense of rhythm invested the whole part with irresistible power.





LES PRESAGES (continued)

On opposite page: The ecstatic moment when Love temporarily triumphs over Fate.





In the two pictures *above and at left* Hero is shown first being dominated by Fate, and then triumphant, preparing for the final tableau which appears on page 104.



LES CENTS BAISERS or THE HUNDRED KISSES (See also pages 68-9)

Although the story of this ballet was that of a rather trite fairy-tale, the dressing and décor were very attractive.

Here in these three photographs we see Igor Yousskevitch and Nina Youchkevitch in the leading rôles.

Both had outstanding dignity and charm.

The ballerina in her silver-studded black dress and fair wig stood out in striking contrast to the colourful costumes of the corps de ballet. This is shown particularly in the large photograph *on the opposite page.*







SCHEHERAZADE (See also pages 162-163)

Bakst's original décor for this ballet was gorgeous — full of rich oriental colouring.

Depicted *in the photographs on this page* are Nina Raievska as Zobeide and Woizikowsky as her Favourite Slave.

This company's interpretation of Scheherazade was more effectively murderous than the later renderings I have seen in Melbourne.

The impression of wild confusion, and of an orgy of slaughter, was probably created by the same dancers rushing on to the stage again and again; but however it was done, it was most convincing.

On the opposite page: The King's Brother is in the act of killing the Golden Slave.







CARNAVAL (See also pages 128-129)

This work by Fokine to Schumann's famous music is perhaps one of the most artistic of all ballets. Schumann's music was written as a series of character sketches in sound, and is a consummate achievement in art. Fokine, with equal genius, brings these sketches visibly to life in most subtle and fascinating moods and characters at a masked ball. This ballet is full of charm, with pathos, tragedy, comedy and frolic all in turn revealed, as the music and the dancing simultaneously express the same idea.

In this company's production the work of Kirsova and Yousskevitch was outstanding.

Above : Natalie Branitzka is seen as Chiarina, Valerie Shavesky as Eusebius, and Pierrot in the foreground.

At right : Natalie Branitzka, in centre, in the Valse Nobile, which is said to be the "masterpiece of the waltz".

On opposite page : Columbine and Harlequin (Kirsova and Yousskevitch) in a group near the end of the ballet.







WOOD & HALL,
MELBOURNE.

PETROUCHKA (See also pages 150-153)

On opposite page is a pose photographed during Kirsova's capital rendering of the Doll in this ballet, with Woizikowsky as the Moor. Her control of facial expression, and stiff automaton-like movements made one feel that she was indeed made of wood. Yet her "doll-soul" was affected by the eternal triangle created with Petrouchka and the Moor.





COTILLON (See also page 66)

Above and at left are two photographs of Cotillon with Tchinarova in the foreground.

A ballet with no story, it just suggests the atmosphere of a colourful ball-room, filled with romance, jealousy, hatred and other such emotions.

A most difficult theme upon which to create a ballet, I should think, yet it was most interesting.

The dresses were composed of layers of coloured net superimposed over one another to give a shot effect in rainbow tints.



SPECTRE DE LA ROSE (See also pages 123 and 198)

At left : Igor Yousskevitch impressed me very much in this rôle. His conception of it was romantic without being sentimental, and his magnificent physique, lightness and grace were ideally suited to it. The quality of the colouring of his costume, and the blending from pale to rich rose tints were delightful.

Valentina Blinova invariably partnered him in this dance. She looked very attractive and her arabesque was exceptionally beautiful.

SCUOLA DI BALLO (See also page 141)

At right : This gay ballet to Boccherini's music was always a welcome item.

When Woizikowsky took a leading part in it, he inspired all the company with his splendid sense of rhythm; and rhythm is the essence of the charm of Scuola Di Ballo.

LA BOUTIQUE FANTASQUE

On opposite page : This ballet was full of lively fun and gaiety. Rossini's music was delightfully fresh with a crystal-clear quality. In their very picturesque costumes, Nina Youchkevitch and Natalie Branitzka represent the Queens of Hearts and Clubs respectively, with Igor Yousskevitch as the King of Spades, and Valerie Shavesky as the King of Diamonds. Jan Hoyer and Serge Unger appear in the background.







LA BOUTIQUE FANTASQUE (concluded)

At left are Roland Guerard as the Dandy and Birger Bartholin as the Melon Vendor. Both created great amusement in these comedy parts.

At right : Kirsova and Woizikowsky in the Can-Can Dance. Kirsova had great charm in her rôle as the Doll, which she danced with infectious gaiety, whilst Woizikowsky danced his part with a brilliant sense of rhythm.

Opposite : Kirsova in the delightful final scene.







BEAU DANUBE (See also pages 138-140)

Beau Danube has a frothy sparkling gaiety. When on the programme, it was always used as the final ballet of the evening, and the dancers, in a carefree spirit, seemed to invite the audience to share in their fun.

Above is Kirsova as the Street Dancer, Marian Winter as the Strong Man, and Jan Hoyer as the Manager.

At right : Roland Guerard as the King of the Dandies.





THAMAR (See also page 96)

In Thamar there was little dancing interest, this ballet being mainly drama.

Bakst's clever décor, and the strong acting of Tchinarova as the ultra-sadistic Queen, made the gruesome story exceedingly effective. She looked positively bloodthirsty in this part, an extraordinary contrast to her gaiety in Beau Danube.

Above: The Queen (Tchinarova) waves her scarf to her prospective victim.

At right: Having accepted the Prince's love, she treacherously stabs him and is seen here recoiling with blood-stained hands as he tries to struggle to his feet. Valentin Froman took the part of the Prince on this occasion.





CONTES RUSSE

Russian fairy-tales provide the theme for this ballet, which is of a rather formalized and old-fashioned type.

The effective final tableau seen *in these two photographs* shows the inevitable ending, where the Prince (Valentin Froman)—riding on a cardboard horse—claims the Princess (Nina Youchevitch).





PORT SAID

At left : Sonia Woizikowska is shown in the principal part of the French Girl, and Nina Raievska as the Oriental Dancer.

This ballet depicts a sordid scene in a low-down bar at Port Said, frequented by sailors and their women. It was a shock to many to see our ballerinas in this type of ballet, after the idealistic themes of so many others, but it had a saving grace, a continuous sparkle of humour.

PRINCE IGOR (See also page 112)

The dim lighting and the wild whirl of native dancing made it difficult to secure photographs during this ballet. Woizikowsky's thrilling rhythm seemed to inspire all the other dancers to an extreme frenzy, as the pace increased to a great climax.



COLONEL W. DE BASIL'S
COVENT GARDEN RUSSIAN BALLET COMPANY

HIS MAJESTY'S THEATRE, MELBOURNE SEASONS 1938-39 AND 1939-40

Principals included : (both seasons unless otherwise indicated)

Tatiana Riabouchinska
Irina Baronova (1938-39)
Tamara Toumanova (1939-40)
Nina Verchinina (1939-40)
Lubov Tchernicheva (1939-40)
Tamara Grigorieva
Lisa Serova (1938-39)
Vera Nemtchinova (1939-40)
Olga Morosova (1939-40)
Tatiana Stepanova (1939-40)
Sono Osato
Marina Svetlova
Alexandra Denisova
Vera Nelidova
Tamara Tchinarova

David Lichine
Anton Dolin (1938-39)
Paul Petroff
Roman Jasinsky
Dimitri Rostoff
Michel Panaieff (1939-40)
Yura Lazovsky
Edouard Borovansky (1938-39)
H. Algeranoff
Igor Schwezoff (1939-40)
Yurek Shabelevsky (1938-39)

These two companies which visited Australia in 1938-39 and 1939-40 were, to a large extent, composed of the same dancers, so I am grouping photographs of them together here.

These companies were formed around a galaxy of stars; nevertheless, at first acquaintance they seemed disappointing. We knew and appreciated the artistry of the stars of the previous company in the various ballets. These were now repeated by dancers famous overseas, but unknown to us, and they did some things rather differently. Gradually, however, individualities began to shine out, and their brilliance thrilled us.

These companies gave to us in Melbourne, in two seasons, a magnificent selection of the best ballets performed overseas during the previous thirty years.

REPERTOIRE

Ballet	1938–39	1939–40	Choreography	Music by	Décor by	Photo Page
Aurora's Wedding	„	„	Petipa	Tchaikowsky	Bakst	62-65
Blue Danube	–	„	Lifar	Strauss	Polunin (after Guys)	138-140
Carnaval	„	„	Fokine	Schumann	Bakst	128-129
Cent Baisers	„	–	Nijinska	D'erlanger	Hugo	68-69
Cendrillon	„	„	Fokine	D'erlanger	Gontcharova	120-122
Choreartium	„	–	Massine	Brahms	Tereckovitch and Lourie	146-148
Cimarosiana	–	„	Massine	Cimarosa	Sevt	—
Concurrence	„	–	Balanchine	Auric	Derain	127
Coq d'or	„	„	Fokine	Rimsky-Korsakoff	Gontcharova	113-119
Cotillon	„	–	Balanchine	Chabrier	Berard	66
Faune	–	„	Nijinsky	Debussy	Prince Schervachidze	142-145
Fire Bird	–	„	Fokine	Stravinsky	Gontcharova	124-126
Francesca da Rimini	–	„	Lichine and Henry Clifford	Tchaikowsky	Oliver Messel	76-81
Gods go a'begging	„	„	Lichine	Handel	Bakst	97
Good-humoured Ladies	„	„	Massine	Scarlatti	Bakst	67
Graduation Ball	–	„	Lichine	Strauss	Benois	82-89
Icare	–	„	Lifar	Lifar	Nolan	90-91
Jeux d'enfants	„	–	Massine	Bizet	Miro	132-133
Midnight Sun	„	–	Massine	Rimsky-Korsakoff	Larionoff	—
Paganini	–	„	Fokine	Rachmaninoff	Soudeikine	154-161
Papillon	„	„	Fokine	Schumann	Doboujinsky and Bakst	134-137
Pavanne	–	„	Lifar	Faure	Prince Schervachidze	—
Pavillon	–	„	Lichine	Borodin	Benois	149
Petrouchka	„	„	Fokine	Stravinsky	Benois	150-153
Presages	„	„	Massine	Tchaikowsky	Andre Masson	100-105
Prodigal Son	„	–	Lichine	Prokofieff	Georges Roualt	130-131
Protée	„	„	Lichine and Henry Clifford	Debussy	Chirico	70-75
Prince Igor	–	„	Fokine	Borodin	Roerich	112
Scheherazade	„	–	Fokine	Rimsky-Korsakoff	Bakst	162-163
Scuola di Ballo	„	„	Massine	Boccherini	de Beaumont	141
Spectre de la Rose	–	„	Fokine	Weber	Bakst	123
Swan Lake	„	„	Petipa	Tchaikowsky	Korovine	92-95
Sylphides	„	„	Fokine	Chopin	Prince Schervachidze (after Corot)	54-61
Symphonie Fantastique	„	„	Massine	Berlioz	Berard	106-111
Thamar	–	„	Fokine	Balakireff	Bakst	96
Union Pacific	„	–	Massine	Nabokoff	Johnson and Sharaff	98-99



This was the first time Melbourne had the joy of seeing the original décor, based on Corot's famous picture "Souvenir de Mortefontaine", as a most poetic background. It is said that for a good performance of this ballet all the dancers must be ballerinas in their own right; and in this company the individual dancers undoubtedly reached a very high standard.

At left is the tableau at the opening and closing of this lovely ballet.

Below are two photographs of Tatiana Stepanova partnered by Michel Panaieff.

On the next six pages are further studies of Les Sylphides. Prominent in these are :—

Page 56. Anna Volkova, Tatiana Riabouchinska and Vera Nelidova.

„ 57. Riabouchinska at the end of the Prelude.

„ 58. Marina Svetlova and Roman Jasinsky.

„ 59. Anna Volkova, Michel Panaieff and (I think) Razoumova.

„ 60. Riabouchinska.

„ 61. Riabouchinska and company.



















AURORA'S WEDDING (See also pages 24-5)

At left is Irina Baronova as the Princess in the magnificent opening scene with the stately setting by Bakst. Her work in this classic rôle was faultless.

At right, upper, is Alexandra Denisova, in the name part; whilst prominent *in the lower photograph* are (from left to right) Anna Leontieva, Olga Morosova, Tamara Toumanova and Genevieve Moulin.







AURORA'S WEDDING (continued)

At left : Irina Baronova with Anton Dolin in their very fine pas de deux.

At right (upper) : Baronova in her solo, danced with stately dignity, precision, and grace.

At right (below) : David Lichine with Genevieve Moulin in Blue Bird.









COTILLON (See also page 43)

Here we see Riabouchinska *upper* and Baronova *lower* in the midst of the ballroom gaiety.

GOOD - HUMOURED LADIES

At right are two scenes from this gay piece (to Scarlatti's sparkling music) in which the period costumes of beautiful silks and satins were very effective.

In the *upper photograph* are (from left to right) Paul Petroff, Marian Ladre, Olga Morosova and Michel Panaieff.

In the lower picture is Tamara Grigorieva, in her remarkably stately dance.









LES CENT BAISERS (See also pages 36 and 37)

At left we see Baronova as the Princess at the castle gate, attended by her maids-in-waiting.

LES CENT BAISERS (concluded)

At right Paul Petroff, the Prince, disguised as the Swineherd, is courting the Princess.







PROTÉE

This ballet by Lichine is a gem of choreography, in which the dancing, costumes and décor are strikingly original and are combined with the lighting and music to give an atmospheric effect in perfect unity.

The curtain rises to reveal five maidens posed in a temple by the sea, praying to Protée, god of the sea, to come and foretell their destinies. They are bathed in the golden light of dawn which gradually brightens into day. Protée rises from the sea on a sea-horse, dances with them for a short time, then dives back into the sea, leaving them lamenting.

I saw Lichine, Dolin and Jasinsky, at various times, in the name-part, and all gave impressive performances, emphasizing the god-like quality of the rôle.

Unusual interest in this ballet was shown by many of the dancers not taking part, who invariably gathered in the wings to watch each performance. Lisa Serova told me that, from the dancer's point of view, dancing in this ballet is a nerve-wracking strain, because many of the positions are difficult, deliberate, and have to be sustained.

Opposite is a photograph of a frieze-like grouping of the maidens soon after the ballet opens.

Below are two more pictures of the maidens dancing on the sea shore.

In the second picture Serova is shown at right, whilst Osato is in the centre.

On the next four pages are other shots as follow :—

(1) Protée (Dolin) having arrived via the sea-horses, descends the steps and dances before the maidens.

(2) Protée (Lichine) with the maidens kneeling before him in awe.

(3) Protée (Lichine) dances with one maiden (Svetlova).
(Note the interesting contra-motion of the maidens at the rear.)

(4) Protée (Dolin) in a beautiful pose with one maiden, whilst the others weep disconsolately, at being neglected by him.
I have many more lovely photographs of "Protée" which I would like to include, but space must be reserved for other ballets















FRANCESCA DA RIMINI

The story is built around Malatesta's almost insane jealousy against his wife Francesca, and his brother Paolo, who are in love with each other; a theme fit for grand opera, yet told here through the medium of Lichine's ballet in a much more stirring and dramatic manner, I think, from the visual standpoint at any rate, than any grand opera company would be likely to accomplish.

This ballet was an excellent one for photography, as these photos will show.

At left we see Dimitri Rostoff as Malatesta, and Lubov Tchernicheva as Francesca.

At the right (upper) Borovansky is seen as Girolamo—Malatesta's Spy.

At right (lower) Paul Petroff as Paolo and Tchernicheva as Francesca in the love—scene, in which they read of Lancelot's love for Guinevere.







FRANCESCA DA RIMINI (continued)

At left (upper) and *at right* are further photographs of the beautiful love-scene in which Paolo and Francesca see visions of Lancelot and Guinevere, which come to life before them as they read.

At lower left in foreground are Sono Osato as Guinevere and Roman Jasinsky as Lancelot.





FRANCESCA DA RIMINI (concluded)

At left, and right (upper): The Angelic Apparitions in full "song", conducted by the flowing swinging movements of Guinevere (Sono Osato), who is held aloft by Lancelot (Roman Jasinsky).

At right, lower : Malatesta in the final scene murders his brother Paolo, and then Francesca, frantic with grief, throws herself on his sword. Borovansky is seen at right as Girolamo.









GRADUATION BALL

This ballet of Lichine's, said to be based on some previously unknown music of Strauss, was highly entertaining.

The first photograph shows the beautiful drop-curtain used before the ballet commenced, to set the period.

The opening scene in a fashionable girls' school in Vienna, was full of charm and humour. *In the second photograph*, we see the junior girls in their gay dance, which had a delightfully playful quality.

GRADUATION BALL (continued)

Here, *in the upper photograph*, the cadets from a neighbouring military academy are making their dashing entrance, led by Igor Schwezoff as the Old General.

In the *lower one* he is inviting the Head Mistress (Borislav Ruanine) to dance with him.









GRADUATION BALL (continued)

Here *upper* Lichine is being urged by Toumine to "break the ice" by approaching one of the girls to ask her for a dance.

Riabouchinska is standing at the head of the line of junior girls.

Through the medium of most subtly awkward gesture and facial expression, her portrayal of a shy school girl was amazing. It seemed as if she could not be acting—she simply *was* a naïve school girl.

The *lower photograph* shows all the cadets urging Lichine forward.

(Lichine said that he had received numerous letters from nervous males congratulating him on his portrayal of their feelings in similar circumstances.)

GRADUATION BALL (continued)

In the upper picture Lichine is overwhelmed by the immediate and willing response from the girl of his choice.

Below is one of the amusing divertissement with Marina Svetlova as the school girl and Helene Lineva and Maria Agrova as the two teachers.









GRADUATION BALL (continued)

At left are two photographs of the romantic divertissement La Sylphide and the Scotsman (based on the story of the original Sylphide) in which Tatiana Stepanova and Michel Panaieff were delightful.

GRADUATION BALL (continued)

At right are two more incidents from the divertissement, namely:— (1) The Drummer, danced by Nicolas Orloff, and (2) The Dance-step Competition, showing Alexandra Denisova in the foreground and Genevieve Moulin further back.









GRADUATION BALL (concluded)

Upper left : Denisova and Moulin are lying back exhausted, in the arms of their supporters, at the end of the Dance-Step Competition.

In the *lower photograph* Riabouchinska and Lichine are seen in their Circus Dance.

On the right is a climax in this divertissement in which Riabouchinska made a spectacular leap with unfailing accuracy, to be caught firmly by Lichine as shown.







ICARE

This ballet by Serge Lifar is based on the Greek legend telling the story of Icarus, who attempts to fly with wings attached to him by wax. Flying too near the sun, the wax melts and he falls to the ground.

The ballet had the unusual feature of being danced to the music of percussion instruments only.

In the first photograph is shown the dance of the Greek Maidens (Denisova, Morosova, Moulin and Osato – only three of whom are shown here).

In the next, the wings are being attached to Icarus (Jasinsky) by his father Dedalus (Rostoff).

Opposite Icarus falls to the ground when his attempt to fly fails.







SWAN LAKE (See also pages 26-27 and 209)

In the photograph at *top left*, the Queen of the Swans (Toumanova) pleads with the Prince (Petroff) to protect the group of swans from the hunters.

The *lower photograph* shows Baronova and Petroff in the love-duet while the swans group themselves in the background.

Opposite is a photograph showing Anton Dolin as the Prince with Baronova as the Queen.





SWAN LAKE (continued)

On left is the well-known and beautifully balanced group of all the Swans.

On right are two photographs, one showing Toumanova at a moment of poise, solo; the other showing her in arabesque, with Paul Petroff.









THAMAR (See also page 49)

In this company's production of Thamar, Lubov Tchernicheva took the part of the Queen, whilst Paul Petroff was the Prince.

Petroff was very effective in this rôle, and Tchernicheva's acting had a brilliantly murderous quality, from the moment when she first waved her scarf to the Prince, to her final wave at the end of the ballet, summoning her next victim. This is a ballet one would not like to see too often.

GODS GO A-BEGGING

In the upper photograph is Yurek Shabelevsky as the Shepherd, in the first production of this ballet in Melbourne.

In the lower one Roman Jasinsky is shown with Tatiana Riabouchinska in the final scene, in which they appear bathed in a flood of lovely golden light, which was most effective.







UNION PACIFIC

This ballet by Massine deals with the building of the trans-continental American railway which was completed in 1869, having been built in two sections, from either end, by rival capitalists. It has some amusing satire in the various scenes as the story unfolds.

The first picture, at left, shows a drop-curtain representing a plan of part of the railway, with the Surveyor in the foreground.

In the next, we see Baronova, as Lady Gay, with the Chinese Workmen in the background.

UNION PACIFIC (continued)

At upper right, a dance is in progress in the Big Tent, where a motley crowd is gathered.

The famous Barman's dance, originally danced by Massine himself, was here performed very effectively by Yura Lazovsky.

Lower right is the final tableau when, on completion of the work, the rival capitalists celebrate with great pomp and ceremony.









LES PRESAGES (See also Pages 30-35)

At left, upper, is Nina Verchinina as Action, the rôle created by her in the original production in London.

At left, lower, is the very effective scissors movement, where the dancers, working up to a climax of strong and rhythmic activity, express the intense feeling of the music.

The unusual colourings of the costumes in this movement (magenta, grey and green) are very striking and effective against the vivid Picasso-like background.

Opposite we see Toumanova as Passion with Petroff as Hero.

Toumanova, at this moment, demonstrated, as she often did, her ability to strike a pose instantly, (on one point as shown) and to hold it unwaveringly for several seconds.

The costume worn by Passion is of a rich tomato colour, while Hero's costume is pale apple-green and yellow with crimson markings.







LES PRESAGES (continued)

At left, upper, we see the Lovers clinging to each other in fear, as Fate enters.

In the lower picture Fate is dominating them and drawing them apart.

LES PRESAGES (concluded)

At upper right the young men and maidens are shown expressing exhaustion after their encounter with Fate.

At lower right: Riabouchinska in her happy rôle of Frivolity. She seemed so light that she appeared to float about the stage, as if an integral part of Tchaikowsky's fascinating waltz movement, spinning and pirouetting with the utmost delicacy, ease and rapidity.

On the next two pages: (1) The final tableau. (2) Verchinina, Petroff, Riabouchinska and Toumanova (in that order from left to right), answering the curtain call.













SYMPHONIE FANTASTIQUE

In the first movement, I liked the elusive spirit that Baronova displayed in her rôle of the Beloved, when she appeared, always just evading the outstretched arms of the Young Musician. *See photograph top left.*

During one performance of this ballet, owing to a slight misadjustment of my camera, about twelve photographs were taken on the one negative. Had this happened in any other ballet, the negative would have been useless. But here, this isolated incident gave a result that seemed to be a fantastic and intensified vision of the drugged Musician's dream. This photograph has been admired by many of the principal dancers, including Baronova, and I thought it so interesting that I have had it reproduced. *See opposite.*

In the second movement the lovely setting of archways, with bunches of golden lights, enhanced the waltz scene; whilst the picturesque white frocks of the girls swaying among the black evening suits of their partners, seemed to accentuate the rhythm of the dance.

This is shown in the photographs *on the next two pages,* in each of which Irina Baronova and Anton Dolin appear in the leading rôles.











SYMPHONIE FANTASTIQUE (continued)

At the left, upper, is a photograph taken during the Pastorale (3rd movement). It has a tendency to be rather long and dreary, relieved by moments of beauty, such as this graceful pose of Verchinina and Jasinsky.

The prison scene (4th movement), is an amazing example of dramatic choreography. Biting satire is simply and strongly portrayed. *See photograph lower left.*

Opposite Tamara Toumanova as the Witch.

In this last movement, my outstanding memory is of the genius which Toumanova displayed in this satanic rôle. It was undoubtedly one of her best interpretations, although I preferred Baronova's portrayal of the Beloved, in the earlier movements of this symphony.

A comparison of the spirit and individuality which the various ballerinas infuse into any particular rôle is one of the fascinations of ballet.









PRINCE IGOR (See also page 51)

Opposite is an effective study of the Polovtsien Warriors in this well-known ballet, with its thrilling barbaric vigor and rhythm.

LE COQ D'OR

This was one of the most gorgeous of ballets, the décor and dressing being a riot of colour.

Riabouchinska's Golden Cockerel was a gem of characterisation, her acting ability shining out brilliantly in this rôle, in which she seemed to live the part to perfection.

I secured many excellent photographs of her in this ballet, of which a few out of my large collection are reproduced *above and on several succeeding pages.*

She so excelled in this part, that one cannot imagine it being portrayed by anyone else.

The story is full of ironical humour.

Scene 1 shows the old King Dodon sitting on his throne, thoroughly bored, whilst his advisers hold a conference on the defence of his realm, and finally come to blows over the problem.

Then the Astrologer arrives with his Golden Cockerel, which he promises will warn the King if his enemies approach. The King is delighted, and promises the Astrologer anything he wishes as his reward.

The antics of the Cockerel rousing the Old King from his slumbers are delightful. The King at first sends his two sons to meet the enemy, but finally decides to go himself. Photographs from this scene appear *on the next three pages.*

Scene 2 shows first the battle-field, and then the interior of the tent in which the Queen of Shemakhan appears. It is highly amusing and very beautiful. The large photographs *on pages 117 and 118 and the first small one on page 119* were taken during this scene.

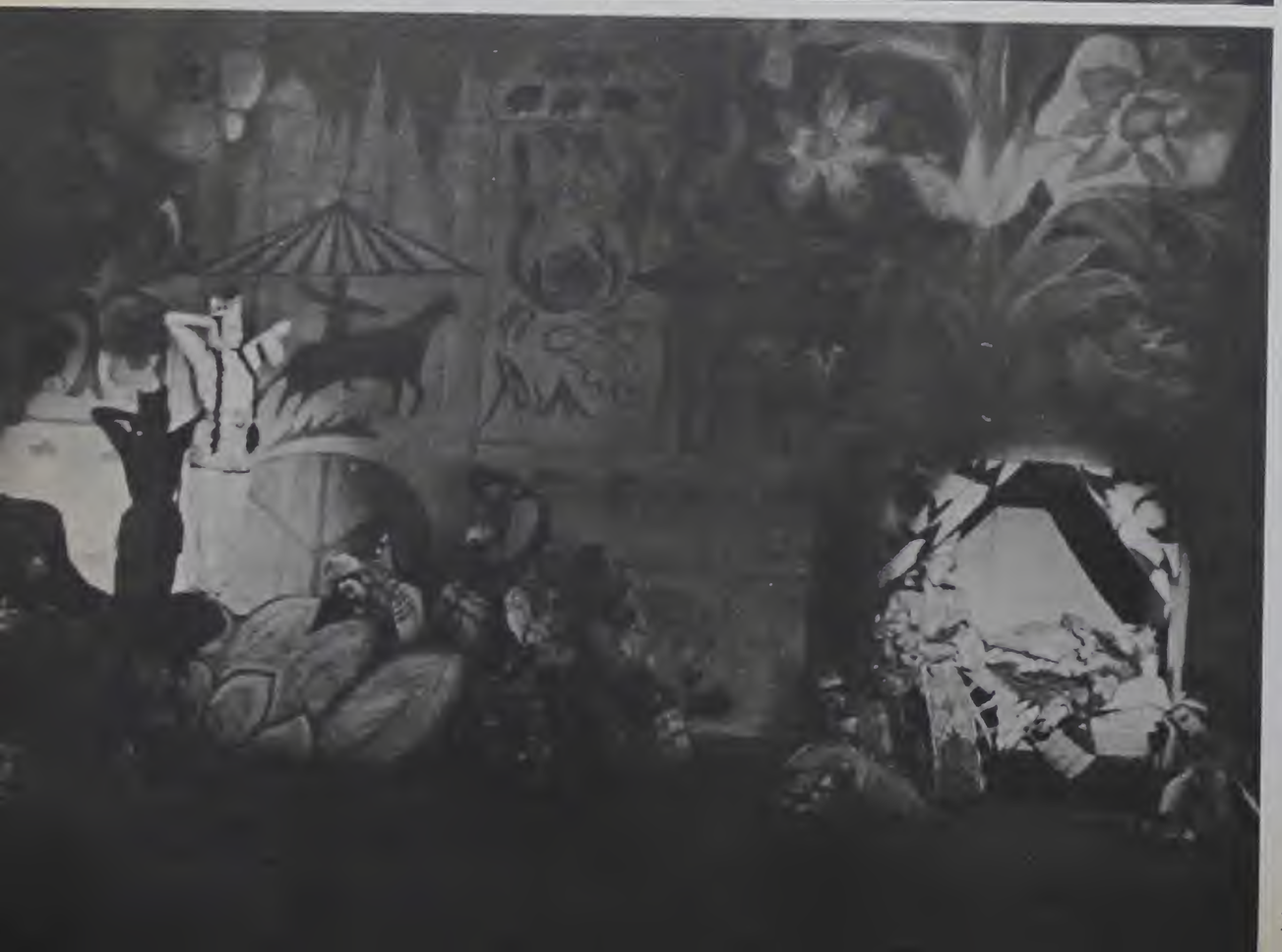
The final tableau, where the Astrologer returns to claim his reward and chooses the Queen, is shown in the last photograph *(see page 119).*

I have so many photographs of this spectacular ballet that it seems a pity not to include more, but space does not permit.









LE COQ D'OR (continued)

At left, upper : The Cockerel is carried away to be placed on a spire to guard the kingdom.

Lower : The Queen of Shemakhan (Irina Baronova on this occasion) appears in the King's dream, disturbing his slumbers.

Opposite : The Queen dances and fascinates the Old King (Dimitri Rostoff).





LE COQ D'OR (concluded)

At left: Olga Morosova is seen as the Queen, triumphant, about to be taken by the Old King to his kingdom.

At right (top): The Queen (Baronova) has the Old King in her power.

At right (lower): To the consternation of the King, the Astrologer (H. Algeranoff) claims the Queen in fulfilment of his promise.









CENDRILLON

Fokine's rendering of the well-known story of Cinderella is unfolded delightfully in this ballet, and Riabouchinska was perfection in the name part – she appeared so child-like, simple and full of wonder.

As Cinderella in the *upper picture* we see her with Raissa Kousnetzova as the Cat.

In the *lower picture* Riabouchinska is seen, with the Good Fairy (Tamara Grigorieva), aglow with anticipation on being invited to the ball.

CENDRILLON (continued)

At right, upper, Cinderella is seen dancing with the Prince (Paul Petroff) in the spectacular ball-room scene, whilst *at right, lower,* she is seen with the Prince crowned by the Good Fairy in the final tableau.







CENDRILLON (concluded)

Opposite is the spectacular coach scene, mostly cardboard probably, but most effective nevertheless.



SPECTRE DE LA ROSE (See also pages 44 and 198)

On right are two photographs of Riabouchinska as the Young Girl just returned from the ball, with Petroff as the Spectre in the *upper one*.





FIRE BIRD (L'Oiseau de Feu) (See also pages 28-29)

The atmosphere of this ballet was that of the magic of dusk in an enchanted garden. This was created by the wonderful décor of Gontcharova, the subdued lighting, and the mysterious scintillating quality of the music. This music suggested sparkling gem-like light piercing the gloom with shafts of ruby, emerald and sapphire flame from the heart of a fire. In this setting, the Fire Bird embodied the fascination of the whole ballet as she flitted about the stage — her costume glowing red, orange, and gold, with flame-coloured feathers and towering head-dress studded with jewels, sparkling in the spotlight.

Opposite we see Toumanova as the Fire Bird with Petroff as Ivan, the Prince.

On the right, upper, the Fire Bird (Toumanova) dazzles the company as she enters.

On right, lower, Ivan holds the magic egg, captured from the magician Kostchei (Lichine), and is about to break the spell in which all have been held captive.







FIRE BIRD (concluded)

At left is Toumanova in Fire Bird. This picture gives an excellent idea of the rich black and gold back-cloth, with the magic tree of golden apples.

LA CONCURRENCE

The story tells of two rival tailors, who provoked jealous quarrels amongst the inhabitants of the town. Eventually they find themselves ostracised but, content with their profits, they became reconciled to each other.

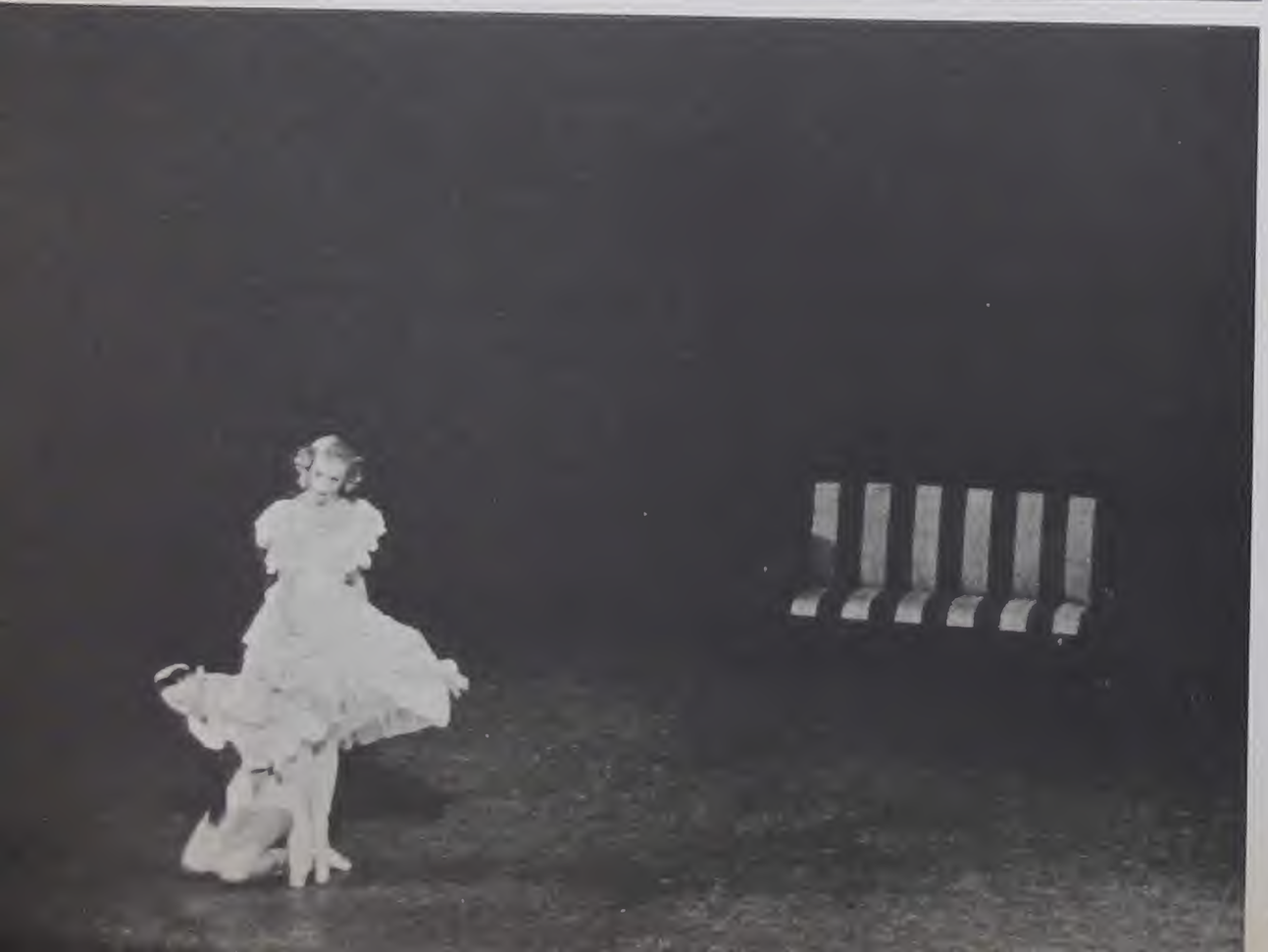
At upper right we see customers entering, lured by the wares of the rival tailors.

Lower right : Baronova and company dance and display ballet-dresses bought from the rival tailors.









CARNAVAL (See also pages 40-1)

This company's production of this ballet is memorable for the excellent work of Riabouchinska and Lichine, whose interpretations of the principal rôles were the essence of charm.

At upper left we have Pierrot (Borovansky) about to attempt to catch Papillon (Anna Volkova) – the latter being exceptionally dainty in this rôle.

At lower left Lichine and Riabouchinska are seen as Harlequin and Columbine.

It is interesting to compare the qualities of the various male dancers who have taken the part of Harlequin. It requires supreme lightness and agility, and also acting ability to portray the character—mischievous, teasing, insolent, sly, sharp and light as steel.

The part of Columbine requires extreme daintiness and flirtatious charm.

CARNAVAL (continued)

On right, upper, is another shot of Lichine and Riabouchinska.

At right, lower, Riabouchinska, Lichine, Borovansky and Ladre are seen in that order in an episode toward the end of the ballet.









THE PRODIGAL SON

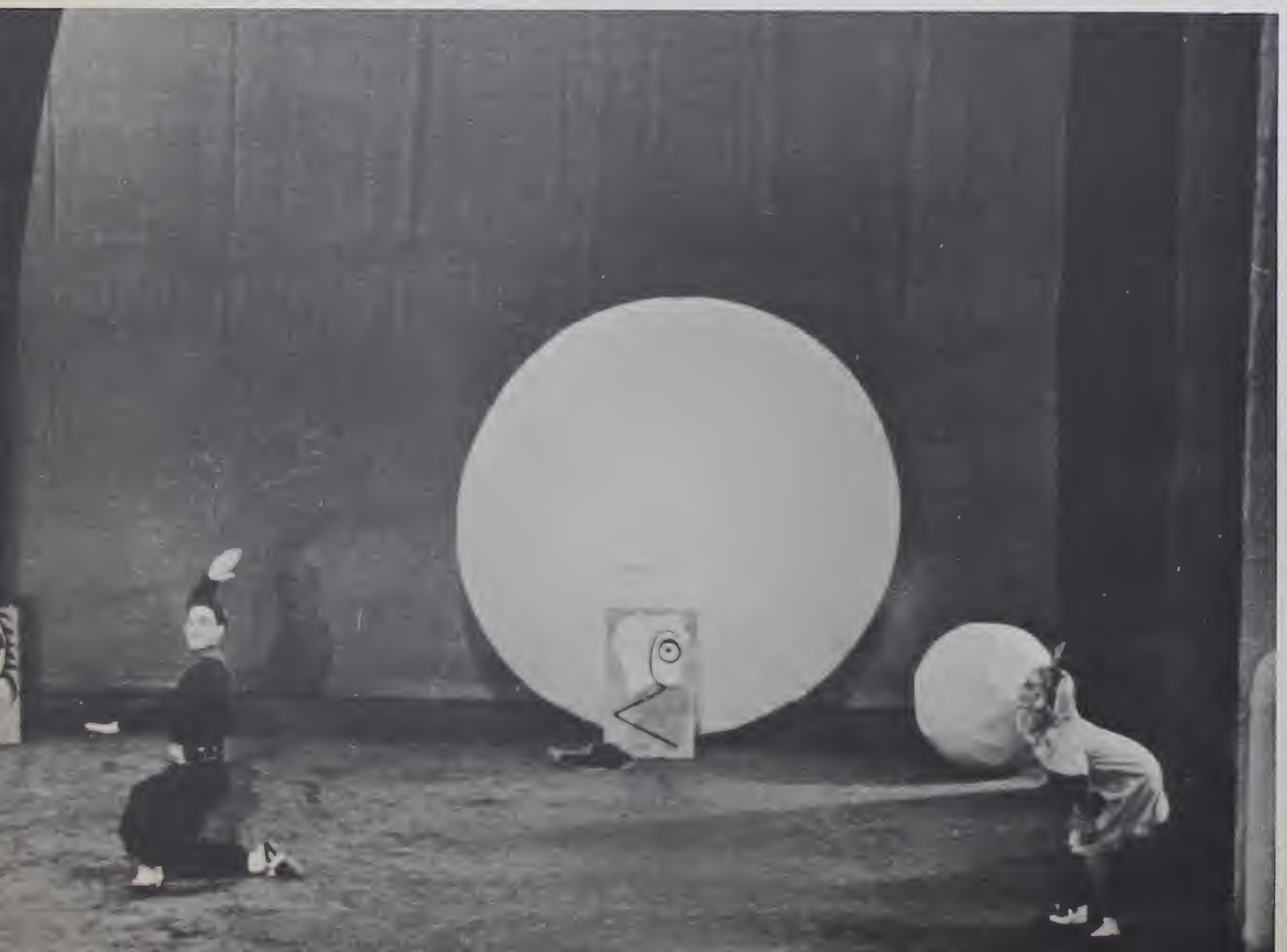
This ballet is based on the well-known biblical story.

The principal rôle was taken here first by Dolin and later by Lichine, with Grigorieva and Baronova alternately as the "Siren".

On this and the opposite page are three interesting tableaux from this ballet, an outstanding feature of which was the geometrical design used in the groupings.







JEUX D'ENFANTS

This ballet was memorable particularly because of the charming music of Bizet—frothy and gay as happy children at play.

At left, upper, Baronova as the Top in the foreground, and Grigorieva and Runanine as the Spirits who Govern the Toys in the background.

At left, lower, Dolin as the Traveller and Riabouchinska as the Child. *Opposite* the Tumbler poses with the Child and the Top.





PAPILLONS

A simple story of Pierrot's attempt to catch the elusive Butterfly by whom he is fascinated.

In these photographs *opposite and on this page* Riabouchinska and Petroff are shown in the principal parts.







PAPILLONS (concluded)

Opposite and at right are three more scenes in this ballet. In the last one Pierrot is left disconsolate as his Papillon reveals herself, now changed to a young lady, and goes off with her escort.







BEAU DANUBE (See also page 48)

Opposite is a photograph, taken early in the ballet, with which Lichine was particularly pleased. Riabouchinska is seated at left.

At right, upper, is Olga Morosova as the Street Dancer, whilst *in the lower picture* she is seen again, with Lichine, as the King of the Dandies, Riabouchinska as the Daughter, Borovansky as the Strong Man, and Algeranoff as the Manager.







BEAU DANUBE (continued)

On the opposite page is a large picture of Lichine and Riabouchinska at the end of their waltz (Blue Danube).

SCUOLA DI BALLO (See also page 44)

In the upper picture, at right, Riabouchinska appears as Rosina, Algeranoff as the Professor with Volkova as Josephine.

In the lower picture, Leskova is shown as the Bad Pupil with Ruanine (I think) as the Count.









L'APRES MIDI D'UN FAUNE

There is a haunting wistfulness to the music of Debussy used in this ballet.

Lichine, as the Faune, was like a statue moving through a succession of perfect poses. He woos the nymphs as they move across the scene, in profile, like figures in a Grecian frieze.

This ballet reveals an instinctive search for beauty.

In the photographs *on this and the opposite page* Lichine is the Faune and Grigorieva, the central maiden.







L'APRES MIDI D'UN FAUNE (continued)

This was a perfect ballet for photography, and I have so many lovely pictures that it was particularly difficult to make a choice for reproduction. *On this page* the Faune is seen dancing with the Nymphs.

L'APRES MIDI D'UN FAUNE (concluded)

Here are two photographs of the Faune with the Maiden's scarf, which he carries away to his rock.







Here are two photographs taken during the first movement showing in (1), Baronova and Lichine in the foreground and in (2) Petroff, Lichine and Baronova.

Lichine's mastery of the art of moving from one position to another with a liquid flowing quality, his ease combined with strength, and his outstanding individuality were most noticeable in this and the last movement.

CHOREATIUM

This is another magnificent symphonic ballet by Massine.

It is an abstract ballet translating into visible movement the Fourth Symphony of Brahms.

The genius displayed by Massine in this work is amazing.



CHOREATIUM (continued)

At upper right. Tamara Grigorieva in the principal part in the slow movement, perhaps the gem of the whole ballet. In simple and effective colouring, the brilliant red robe of Grigorieva stood out from the dull red robes and pattern of white arms of the others in the background.





At lower left is Lisa Serova and partner, Yura Lazovsky, in the third movement.



CHOREATIUM (concluded)

At left is shown the magnificent final tableau. Prominent in it are Baronova, Lichine, Petroff, Serova and Nelidova.



PAVILLION

This was an early ballet of quiet charm by Lichine. It is interesting to note, on comparison, the tremendous advance he made in originality and inspiration in his later creations.

At right are two photographs of this ballet, which was performed only a few times in Melbourne.

In the *upper picture* is Tatiana Leskova in the leading rôle, and *in the lower one* Tamara Toumanova with Roman Jasinsky.







PETROUCHKA (See also page 42)

On the left, upper, is the scene where the Old Charlatan (Marian Ladre) withdraws the curtain, revealing the three puppets in their booths.

In the lower picture the Doll (Toumanova) dances before the crowd.

On the opposite page is another photograph of the dance of the three puppets, showing the Blackamoor (Alonso), the Doll (Toumanova) and Petrouchka (Lazovsky).

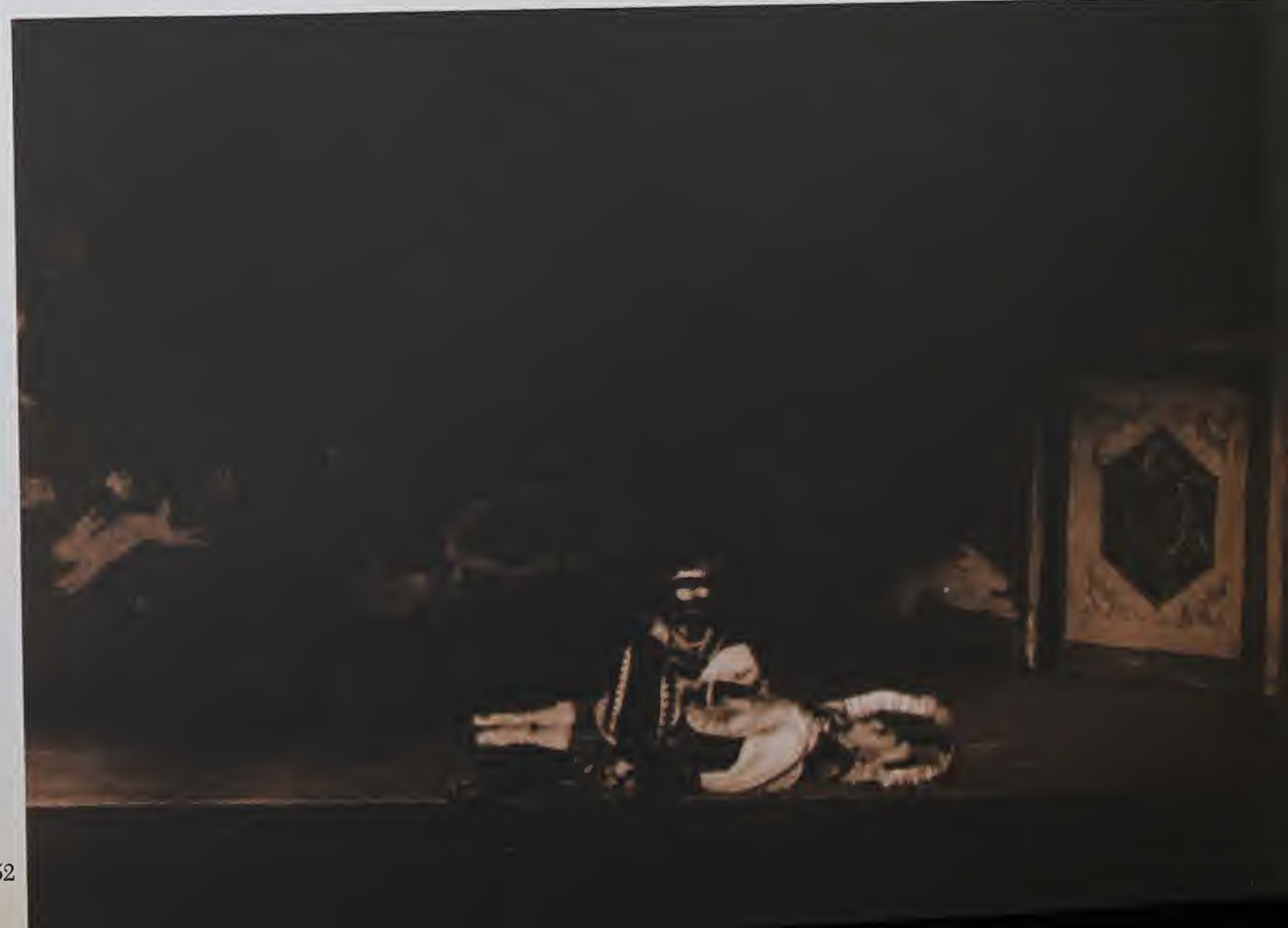




In the lower picture is Riabouchinska with the Blackamoor.

PETROUCHKA (continued)

In the upper picture the Doll (Toumanova) is seen entering the Blackamoor's booth.





PETROUCHKA (concluded)

In the upper picture Petrouchka is seen in a frenzy of despair at the thwarting of his love for the Doll.

In the lower picture – the scene where the Blackamoor, mad with jealousy, murders Petrouchka.







PAGANINI

Fokine's fine ballet tells the story of the struggle of the genius of the violin, Paganini, against jealousy, criticism, misunderstanding and misfortune.

I found this ballet disappointing at first, but soon came to realise what a fine work it is and enjoyed it more each time I saw it.

Dimitri Rostoff in the name part was magnificent, whilst Tatiana Riabouchinska as the Florentine Beauty was very lovely.

At upper left Paganini is seen playing at a performance with Jealousy (Grigorieva) lurking in the background.

At lower left and opposite Riabouchinska and Petroff are dancing in the second movement in which the colouring was delightful, and Riabouchinska's dancing most beautiful.





PAGANINI (continued)

In these two photographs in the second movement, Paganini enters and disturbs the dancers by his satanic appearance and dominating manner.

Then he plays, and by the compelling magic of his music, forces Riabouchinska – a "Florentine Beauty" – to dance.



PAGANINI (continued)

Here the "Florentine Beauty" (Riabouchinska) is seen compelled by Paganini's music, to dance and dance until she falls with exhaustion, to the bewilderment of the previously happy crowd.





On the next page Paganini is seen tormented by his "doubles" wherever he turns, until he is overwhelmed with images and fears in his mind. On the following page he is seen surrounded by Angels in the final scene.









PAGANINI (concluded)

Upper left : Paganini, attended by the Divine Genius (Denisova), attempts to recapture his lost inspiration.

Lower left : After death, Paganini's Spirit is led up to Heaven by the Divine Genius,—his mortal body, which he no longer needs, being discarded.

Opposite : The Death Scene (with Denisova).

It is interesting to note here the remarkable contrast in rôles taken by Rostoff. Consider his work as Paganini, as the Old King (Dodon) in Coq d'Or, and as Malatesta in Francesca da Rimini, to name only a few.





SCHEHERAZADE (See also pages 38-39)

At left, upper and lower, Grigorieva is shown as Zobeide. A tall handsome woman, she was a magnificent figure in this rôle.

At right is the final tragic tableau where Zobeide is dying at the feet of the King (Rostoff) whilst the Slave (Shabelevsky on this occasion) lies dead at the feet of the King's brother.



THE KIRSOVA BALLET

FOUNDED IN SYDNEY, JULY 1940

Principal : Helene Kirsova

Principal Dancers :

Helene Kirsova
Rachel Cameron
Peggy Sager
June Newstead
Helene Ffrance
Henry Legerton
Paul Clementin

This company having been formed in Sydney, I have not had many opportunities of photographing its performances. Many of the photographs which I have taken have already been published in Madame Kirsova's own book. Consequently there is only a small selection included here.

REPERTOIRE

Ballets	Choreography	Music by	Décor by	Photo. on Page
Capriccio	Kirsova	Rimsky-Korsakov	Alice Danciger	—
Dream and A Fairy Tale	Kirsova	Chopin	Loudon Sainthill	167
Faust	Kirsova	Henry Krips	Loudon Sainthill	166
Harlequin	Kirsova	Ravel	Amie Kingston	—
Hansel and Gretel	Kirsova	Humperdinck	Amie Kingston	—
Jeunesse	Kirsova	Poulenc	Bartholin	—
Les Matelots	Kirsova after Massine	Auric	Loudon Sainthill after Pruna	168
Revolution of the Umbrella	Kirsova	Henry Krips	Wolfgang Cardamatis	—
Swan Lake	Petipa	Tchaikowsky	—	—
Sylphides	Fokine	Chopin	—	165
Vieux Paris	Kirsova	Offenbach and Strauss	Loudon Sainthill	169



LES SYLPHIDES (See also pages 22-23, 54-61, 191 and 209)

On left and below are two photographs of the Kirsova Company in Les Sylphides, in which Henry Legerton, Rachel Cameron, Strelsa Heckelman and Peggy Sager appear in the principal parts.

The jet-black back-cloth used on this occasion robbed this company's excellent performance of this ballet of some of its poetic atmosphere and also made photographs of it rather unsatisfactory.





FAUST

Here are photographs of Kirsova's three-act ballet, in the first of which Tamara Tchinarova is seen at rear and Raissa Kousnetzova and Valery Shaevsky in the foreground in the first act.

At right Strelsa Heckelman and Rachel Cameron are seen in the last act.





A DREAM AND A FAIRY TALE

At left and below are two photographs of this ballet of Kirsova's, on the theme of toys from the cupboard coming to life during a child's dream.

Tchinarova is seen in the rôle of the Fairy, in which she wore a dress of beautiful corn-flower blue with spangles glinting as she danced.



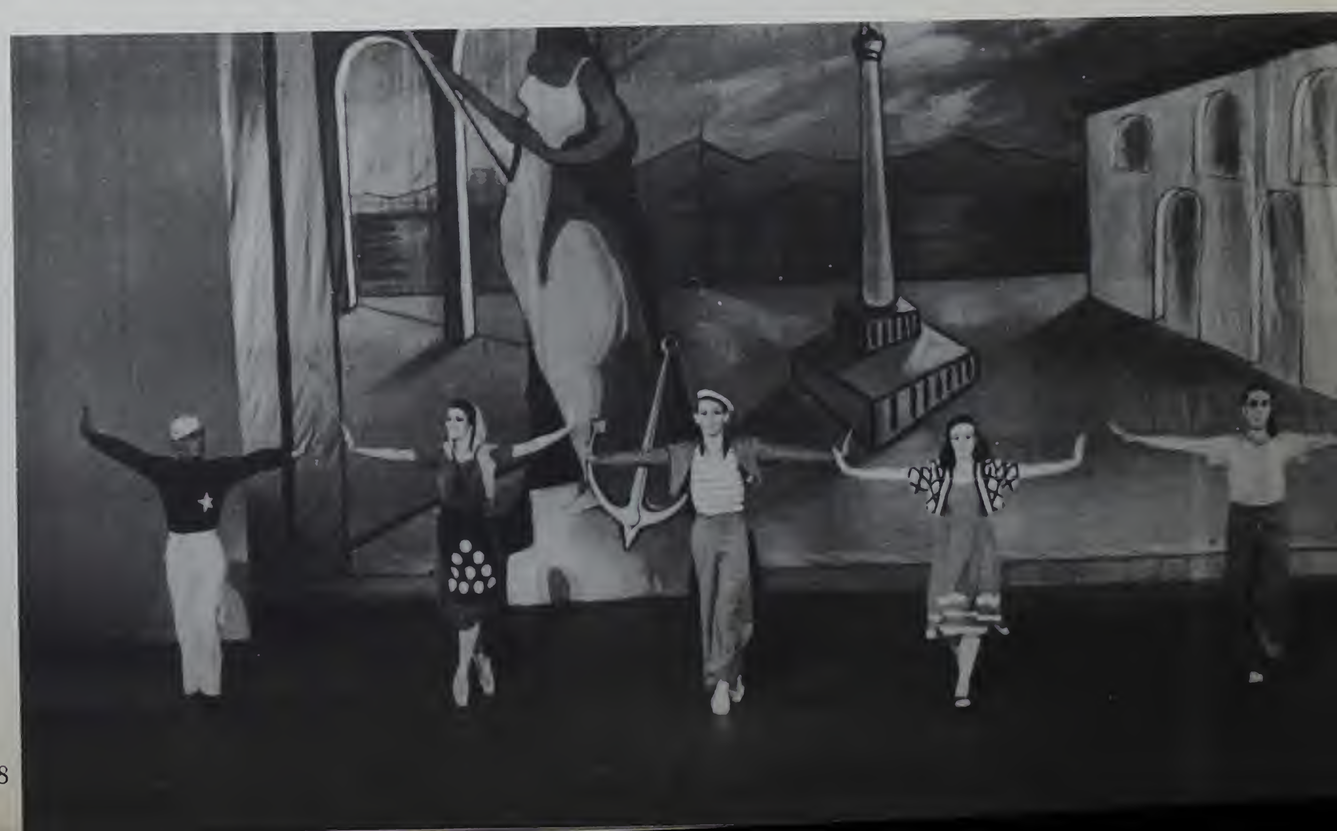


LES MATELOTS

Henry Legerton is shown in the photograph *at left.*

Although quite young, he displayed a great sense of the theatre in his rendering of comedy in this part.

At right are Edouard Sobishevsky, Tamara Tchinarova, Henry Legerton, Strelsa Heckelman and Valery Shaevsky.





VIEUX PARIS

At left Strelsa Heckelman is seen with Edouard Sobishevsky.

Tamara Tchinarova is seen in foreground *at right* dancing with Valery Shaevsky.



THE BOROVANSKY AUSTRALIAN BALLET COMPANY

FOUNDED IN MELBOURNE IN MAY 1939

Principals: Edouard Borovansky and Xenia Borovansky

Principal Dancers:

Dorothy Stevenson
Laurel Martyn
Edna Busse
Corrie Lodders
Mara North
Anne MacKintosh
Jonet Wilkie
Keitha Ross-Munro
Rachel Cameron
E. Borovansky
Martin Rubinstein
Serge Bousloff
L. Rentoul
M. O'Neill

Mr. Borovansky came to Australia with the 1938-39 de Basil Company, after having been associated with the Russian Ballet for many years, and stayed to establish his own dancing academy and ballet company in Melbourne. The influence of Massine, the originator of Symphonic Ballet, is clearly discernible in Mr. Borovansky's works, such as Fantasy on Greig's Concerto. He has originality nevertheless, and his sense of grouping, appears to me to be quite outstanding.

Madame Borovansky. a niece of Pavlova, has also produced a number of charming and original ballets in the classical style.

Besides Edouard Borovansky and Madame Borovansky, this company has been fortunate to have had two talented and experienced Australian choreographers in its two leading dancers Dorothy Stevenson and Laurel Martyn; whilst Edna Busse and Martin Rubinstein are very accomplished soloists.

REPERTOIRE

Ballet	Choreographer	Music	Décor and Costumes	Photo. on Page :
Autumn Leaves	E. Borovansky	Chopin	—	179-180
Beau Danube	Massine	Schumann	—	—
Bees	X. Borovansky	—	—	176
Beethoven Variations	L. Martyn and D. Stevenson	Beethoven	—	177
Bush Fire	E. Borovansky	—	—	172-173
Caprice	E. Borovansky	Tchaikowsky	W. Dargie and R. Shackel	181
Carnaval	Fokine	Schumann	—	—
En Saga	L. Martyn	Sibelius	W. Constable	183
Etude	E. Borovansky	Debussy	—	174
Facade	F. Ashton	Walton	~~Armstrong~~ W. Constable	182
Fantasy on Greig Concerto	E. Borovansky	Greig	—	184-187
Giselle	Henry de Saint Georges and Theophile Gautier	Adam	~~J. Urban~~ W. Constable	194
L'amour Ridicule	X. and E. Borovansky	~~X. and E. Borovansky~~ Albeniz	~~Albeniz~~	175
Pas Classique	Xenia Borovansky	Tchaikowsky	—	174
Russian Dances	E. Borovansky	Moussorgsky and Schindler	—	178
Scriabine Preludes	D. Stevenson	Scriabine	—	177
Sea Legend	D. Stevenson	Esther Rofe	A. McCulloch	192-193
Sigrid	L. Martyn	Greig	—	178
Submerged Cathedral	D. Stevenson	Debussy	—	—
Sylphides	Fokine	Chopin	—	191
Terra Australis	E. Borovansky	Esther Rofe	—	195
Vltava	E. Borovansky	Smetana	W. Constable	188-190

This company, in addition to the above,has also given performances of other ballets including "Carnaval," "Coppelia" and "Scheherazade."



BUSH FIRE BALLET

This was an early production of the Borovansky Company – and a very effective one too.

In these photographs we have :

At left and upper right : The Company.

At lower right : Corrie Lodders as the Spirit of Fire in glistening red sequins.







ETUDE

At left, upper: A charming piece, having no story, produced by E. Borovansky. It was repeated many times and was always welcomed. Robert Anderson and Rachel Cameron here have the principal parts.

PAS CLASSIQUE

At right, lower: The choreography by Madame Borovansky in the classical manner, revealed style, and a beautiful sense of grouping.



L'AMOUR RIDICULE

Here are two photographs of this ballet by E. Borovansky, in humourous vein. The upper one shows Dorothy Stevenson and Serge Bousloff in the principal parts.





The *lower picture* shows E. Borovansky (in centre) and Company.



BEES

The conception of a bee-hive translated into ballet was excellently sustained throughout, and enhanced by the effective décor and honey-coloured costumes.

Here are two photographs of this appealing little ballet, taken at the Borovansky studio.

In the *upper one* we see Edna Busse, Laurie Rentoul, Ken Rowell and Martin Rubinstein, whilst in the *lower one* Jonet Wilkie as the Spirit of the Hive is the central figure.



SCRIABINE PRELUDES

In the *upper picture at right* is a tableau from this ballet based on Scriabine's music—the choreography being by Dorothy Stevenson. Mara North is the central figure.





BEETHOVEN VARIATIONS

In the *lower photograph at left* is a glimpse of a dance to Beethoven's Variations composed by Laurel Martyn and Dorothy Stevenson.

The practice tights in black were very effective against this pure white back cloth.



RUSSIAN DANCES

On left, upper, are E. Borovansky and Marcia La Gruta in Russian Dances by E. Borovansky.

SIGRID

At *lower left* are Edna Busse and Martin Rubinstein in Laurel Martyn's ballet.

The story of this ballet is that of a maiden who died of a broken heart, but was permitted once a year to return and dance with the village maidens.



AUTUMN LEAVES (see also page 18)

On right : Edna Busse is the central figure in this study of Borovansky's version of Autumn Leaves.







AUTUMN LEAVES (continued)

At left, upper: Rachel Cameron with the company dancing in Autumn Leaves; whilst *in the lower picture* are Rachel Cameron and Serge Bousloff in the same ballet.



CAPRICE

At left are Edna Busse and Serge Bousloff in the opening scene of this ballet by E. Borovansky.

At right : Laurel Martyn and E. Borovansky are shown in their amusing *pas de deux*.





FACADE (See also page 210)

At left : In this picture are Corrie Lodders (in front) as the Milk-maid, Edna Busse (in doorway), and three of the men as Mountaineers in a "Yodelling Song", a very amusing item.

At right : Laurie Rentoul and Ken Rowell in their comical duet "Popular Song", probably the best presentation of this item yet given in Melbourne.





EN SAGA

At left and below are two photographs of the company in a ballet based on the subject of the sorrow of the women left behind when men are called away to war.

This ballet was composed by Laurel Martyn and made a moving drama, particularly when she appeared in the leading rôle, into which she infused most expressive feeling.

In other parts Laurel Martyn could be comic, pathetic, poetic, dainty or mischievous, as the occasion required, and be equally convincing. Few other dancers seem so versatile, and in this respect she is, I think, comparable to Sally Gilmour and Tatiana Riabouchinska.





FANTASY ON GREIG'S CONCERTO IN A MINOR

At left and at upper right are photographs taken during the opening movement of this major work by E. Borovansky.

The décor and costumes were most satisfying in colour and silhouette effects.

In both, Dorothy Stevenson is seen as Desire and E. Borovansky as Man.





At *lower left* : Anne MacKintosh as Woman and E. Borovansky as Man are shown.

FANTASY ON GREIG CONCERTO (continued)

In the right upper photograph Anne Mackintosh and E. Borovansky are shown again in their *pas de deux*.

At left, lower: Laurel Martyn as Remorse, in the delightful slow movement.





At right is the effective final tableau of this ballet.





VLTAVA

Smetana, the composer of the music used in this colourful and popular ballet by Borovansky, was a compatriot of Borovansky. This river ballet with its refreshing style of choreography, full of flowing movements in accord with the haunting music, its graceful dresses like blue water with ripples and its groupings suggesting the winding river, was most satisfying and full of charm.

In these three photographs *opposite and at right* Laurel Martyn is seen, with the company, as the Spirit of the River – a strong and graceful rôle in which she excelled.









VLTAVA (continued)

At left are two photographs of the final tableau, showing the youths and maidens by the river.

LES SYLPHIDES (See also pages 22-23, 54-61, 165 and 209)

Here we have two photographs of the studio version of Les Sylphides, as arranged by Laurel Martyn for the small stage at the Borovansky studio. In spite of the reduction in the number of dancers, the essential charm of the ballet is retained. These intimate glimpses of ballet are very interesting.

At upper right is the company in the opening tableau. The dancers are (from left to right) Laurel Martyn, Dorothy Stevenson, Edna Busse, Mara North, Anne Mackintosh, Laurie Rentoul, Corrie Lodders, Jonet Wilkie and Grace McLean.





Lower : Mara North is dancing the Prelude with Edna Busse in the centre of the group at left.





SEA LEGEND

In these three photographs *on this and the opposite page* Dorothy Stevenson is seen with Martin Rubinstein, in the leading rôle of her own ballet, Sea Legend. It was a very successful and satisfying work, with a fine imaginative décor, — the costumes and movements delightfully suggesting beings living under the sea.

Dorothy Stevenson, in this ballet, cleverly suggested the deep-sea effect by continual swaying movements of the dancers. Even when lying on the sea-floor, they responded to this languorous motion.

Her groupings were beautifully conceived — with long flowing lines, a hint of which is given in these photographs.





GISELLE (See also page 202)

At left and below are two photographs of the company's revival of this time-honoured ballet. Dorothy Stevenson is shown here in the principal part, which she and Laurel Martyn danced alternately.

I thought that both of these Australian dancers gave excellent renderings of the parts of Giselle.



TERRA AUSTRALIS

This ballet was composed by E. Borovansky to music by Esther Rofe. The story is "of a beautiful young Girl, Australia, and her lover the Aboriginal, whose peace is shattered by the arrival of the Pioneer. He seduces Australia and kills the Aboriginal, who is received back into the Earth (portrayed on the lower plane of the stage by the corps de ballet)."





Here are two photographs of this ballet, which was difficult to record satisfactorily because the ultra-strong contrast used in the lighting.
Martin Rubinstein and Peggy Sager took the leading roles.

BALLET RAMBERT

UNDER THE PERSONAL DIRECTION OF MADAME MARIE RAMBERT

The Company consisted of :

Sally Gilmour
Belinda Wright
Joyce Graeme
Elizabeth Schooling
Sara Luzita
Paula Hinton
Margaret Scott
Annette Chappell
Pamela Vincent
Brenda Hamlyn
Eileen Ward

Walter Gore
Frank Staff
Harry Cordwell
John Gilpin
John Paget
David Hunt
Barbara Grimes
Margaret Hill
Sylvia Briar
Audrey Turner
Enid Owen

This was a small company of very accomplished dancers, and a unique feature was the fact that they all appeared under their own names instead of under assumed stage names as was the custom with members of other companies.

No attempt seems to have been made to set any dancers apart as stars, although a few outshone the others by sheer merit of performance.

Sally Gilmour danced a principal rôle in almost every ballet. She excelled in both comedy and drama with apparent ease. The contrasts in her rôles were tremendous when one thinks of her comedy parts in Facade, Bar aux Folies-Bergere, and Peter and the Wolf, and the drama shown by her in Lady into Fox, Giselle, Fugitive and both comedy and drama in The Sailor's Return.

Walter Gore also was excellent in both comedy and drama, as shown by his Waiter in Bar aux Folies-Bergere, and his Fugitive in the ballet of that name, to mention only two examples. As a choreographer he is also making a name for himself.

Belinda Wright was very impressive in many classic rôles, particularly Swan Lake; whilst Joyce Graeme, Elizabeth Schooling, Frank Staff and John Gilpin have all done outstanding work.

REPERTOIRE

Ballets	Choreographer	Music	Décor and Costumes	Photo. on Page
Bar aux Folies-Bergere	Ninette de Valois	Chabrier	Wm. Chappall	199
Blue Bird	Petipa	Tchaikowsky	Harry Cordwell	—
Capriol Suite	Frederick Ashton	Peter Warlock	Wm. Chappall	206
Czernyana	Frank Staff	Czerny	Eve Swinstead Smith	208
Death and the Maiden	Andree Howard	Schubert	Andree Howard	—
Facade	Frederick Ashton	Walton	J. Armstrong	210
Faune	Nijinsky	Debussy	Bakst	—
Fugitive	Andree Howard	Leonard Salzedo	Hugh Stevenson	204
Gala Performance	Antony Tudor	Prokofiev	Hugh Stevenson	200
Giselle	Coralli and Perrott	A. Adam	Hugh Stevenson	202
Jardin aux Lilas	Antony Tudor	Chausson	Hugh Stevenson	199
Lady Into Fox	Andree Howard	Honegger	Nadia Benois	205
Masques	Frederick Ashton	Poulenc	Sophie Fedorovitch	207
Mermaid	Andree Howard and Susan Salaman	Ravel	Andree Howard	204
Mephisto Waltz	Frederick Ashton	Liszt	Sophie Fedorovitch	208
Mr. Punch	Walter Gore	Arthur Oldham	Ronald Wilson	200
Peter and the Wolf	Frank Staff	Prokofiev	Guy Sheppard	202
Plaisance	Walter Gore	Rossini	Harry Cordwell	206
Planets	Antony Tudor	Gustav Holst	Hugh Stevenson	201
Sailor's Return	Andree Howard	Arthur Oldham	Andree Howard	203
Simple Symphony	Walter Gore	Britten	Ronald Wilson	207
Soiree Musical	Antony Tudor	Rossini	Hugh Stevenson	198
Spectre de la Rose	Fokine	Weber	Bakst	198
Swan Lake	Petipa and Ivanov	Tchaikowsky	Harry Cordwell	209
Sylphides	Fokine	Chopin	Ronald Wilson	209



SOIREE MUSICAL

At left, upper : An impressive setting showing a pas de deux by Belinda Wright and David Hunt.

SPECTRE DE LA ROSE (see also pages 44 and 123)

Lower right : The youth and lightness of Belinda Wright and John Gilpin made their interpretation of this well-known ballet soft and appealing.





BAR AUX FOLIES-BERGERE

At left, upper : This clever witty ballet by Ninette de Valois was inspired, as can be seen by the photograph, by Monet's famous painting. Elizabeth Schooling is seen as the barmaid (looking exactly like the one in the painting) and Sally Gilmour (at left) is La Goulue (the Star of the Can Can).

JARDIN AUX LILAS

At right, lower : This ballet had a delightful moonlit setting in a lilac garden, in which, according to the programme, "Caroline, who is betrothed against her will to a man she does not love, tries to bid farewell to her lover, but is repeatedly interrupted by the assembled guests."

Waves of emotion felt by those taking part are very subtly portrayed in this charming ballet.

(Owing to the very subdued stage-lighting used, this ballet was most difficult to photograph.)





GALA PERFORMANCE

At left, upper : The opening scene, shown in this photograph, depicts ballet dancers practising back-stage before a performance. The real characters of the temperamental ballerinas, their jealousies and their mannerisms, are given full play. A most amusing scene !

(The ensuing scene is a burlesque of classical dancing. The ballerinas vie with each other for the applause of the audience—purposely getting in each other's way in the process. There were some very amusing touches in the choreography here.)

MR. PUNCH

At right, lower : Sally Gilmour as Pretty Polly is amused at Mr. Punch (Walter Gore) as he arrives on horseback.

This ballet is a very clever re-rendering of the character of the well-known Punch of Punch and Judy.





THE PLANETS

At *left, upper :* A scene during the first movement, Venus, of this ballet set to some of the well-known music of the Planets Suite by Gustav Holst. Belinda Wright and John Gilpin are shown as the mortals born under Venus. This scene was most effective.

At right, lower : A striking contrast to the upper photograph is this one taken during the second movement, Mars. Instead of the smooth-flowing spirit of love and tenderness in the first movement, the choreography here cleverly depicts stress and strain "which is almost unbearable".

(Unfortunately, space does not permit the reproduction of photographs of the other two movements of this unusual and very fine ballet.)





GISELLE (see also page 194)

This time-honoured ballet was revived very effectively by this company. Sally Gilmour was most moving in her portrayal of Giselle in the first act.

At left, upper: Giselle (Sally Gilmour) and the Queen of the Wilis (Joyce Graeme) in the churchyard scene, Act II.

PETER AND THE WOLF

An unusual "talkie" ballet with a real pantomime flavour.

In the photograph *at lower right* are seen, from left to right, Sally Gilmour as Peter, Sara Luzita as the Duck, Annette Chappell as the Bird, and Paula Hinton as the Cat.



THE SAILOR'S RETURN

This was thought by some to be the most powerful ballet in the Company's repertoire. Certainly Sally Gilmour's range of emotion as Tulip is amazing.

The photograph *at right upper* shows something of the delightful scene, in tropical surroundings, when Tulip arrives for her marriage to the Sailor (Walter Gore). The colouring was exotic and beautiful.





Lower : A photograph of the amusing scene during celebrations in the bar room at the Inn called "The Sailor's Return".

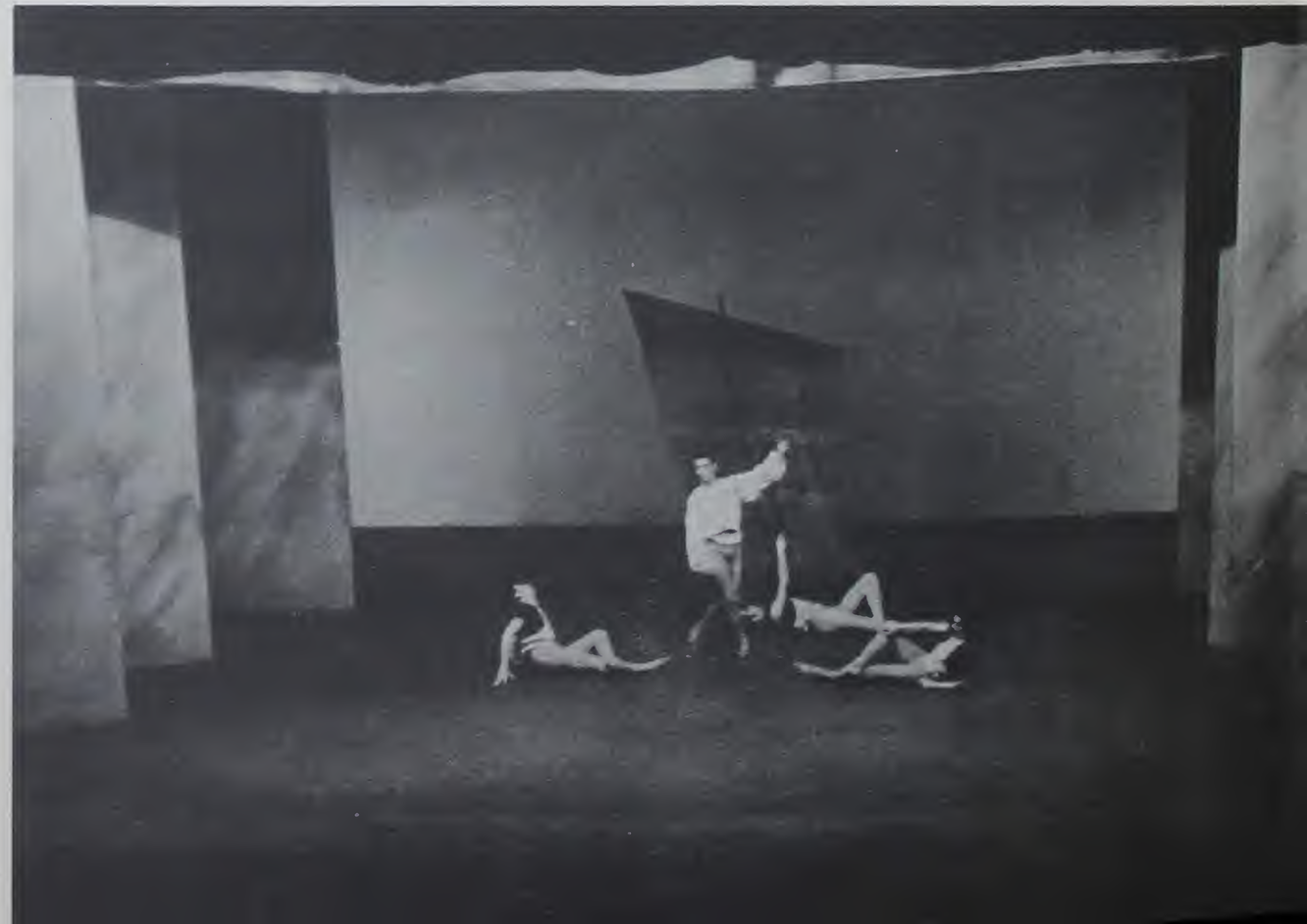


THE FUGITIVE

At left, upper : A photograph showing Sally Gilmour as the younger sister and Margaret Scott as the elder sister. Walter Gore was the fugitive. This was a powerful drama !

THE MERMAID

At right, lower : In Scene 2 of this ballet, during which this photograph was taken, the effect of a lonely ship at sea, at the mercy of wind and wave, was amazingly suggested by clever movements of one sail on a pole.





The top picture shows her before the change comes over her; the lower (after the change) shows her husband (Walter Gore) offering her her freedom—through the open door.

LADY INTO FOX

On left and below are two photographs of this unusual ballet in which the metamorphosis of the lady into fox is portrayed almost too realistically by Sally Gilmour.





PLAISANCE

At left upper : A photograph during this gay ballet of meetings, flirtations and partings.

CAPRIOL SUITE

At lower right : A series of gay folk dances performed in period costume.





LES MASQUES

At left, upper : A scene at a masked ball. Included was a clever imitation of a negro.

SIMPLE SYMPHONY

At right, lower : Another example of Walter Gore's choreography. Simple dances by village folk are set to the lovely music of Benjamin Britten.





MEPHISTO WALTZ

At right, lower : Another ballet with a ball-room scene. It is full of beautiful groupings and dancing, but the devil spoils the fun.

The colourings, flame, black and grey, were most effective.

CZERNYANA

At left, upper : This is a collection of dances to some of Czerny's well-known piano exercises. Each dance is inspired by the mood suggested by the chosen music.





LES SYLPHIDES (See also pages 22-23, 54-61, 165 and 191)

At left, upper: The bright yet diffused lighting used in this company's performance enabled me to get photographs showing the moonlit scene and the dancers at the back of the stage more clearly than usual.

SWAN LAKE (See also pages 26-27 and 92-95)

At right, lower: Here again the lighting was more sympathetic than usual to the camera. Belinda Wright was very fine as the Queen of the Swans and the numerous divertissement were brilliantly danced by Sara Luzita, Sylvia Briar, Barbara Grimes, Annette Chappell, Paula Hinton and John Gilpin. Their elevation was phenomenal.







FINALE – FACADE (See also page 182)

Above are two photographs taken at the end of the farewell performance of Facade by the Rambert Company on 24th January 1948. *At left* Madame Rambert making her speech. She seemed to be very pleased with Melbourne's response to her company's efforts, which enabled them to perform here for such a long period without travel, and said she hoped to return to us.

At right, Sally Gilmour, forced by public applause, makes a speech also. It was a grand farewell evening after a memorable season !

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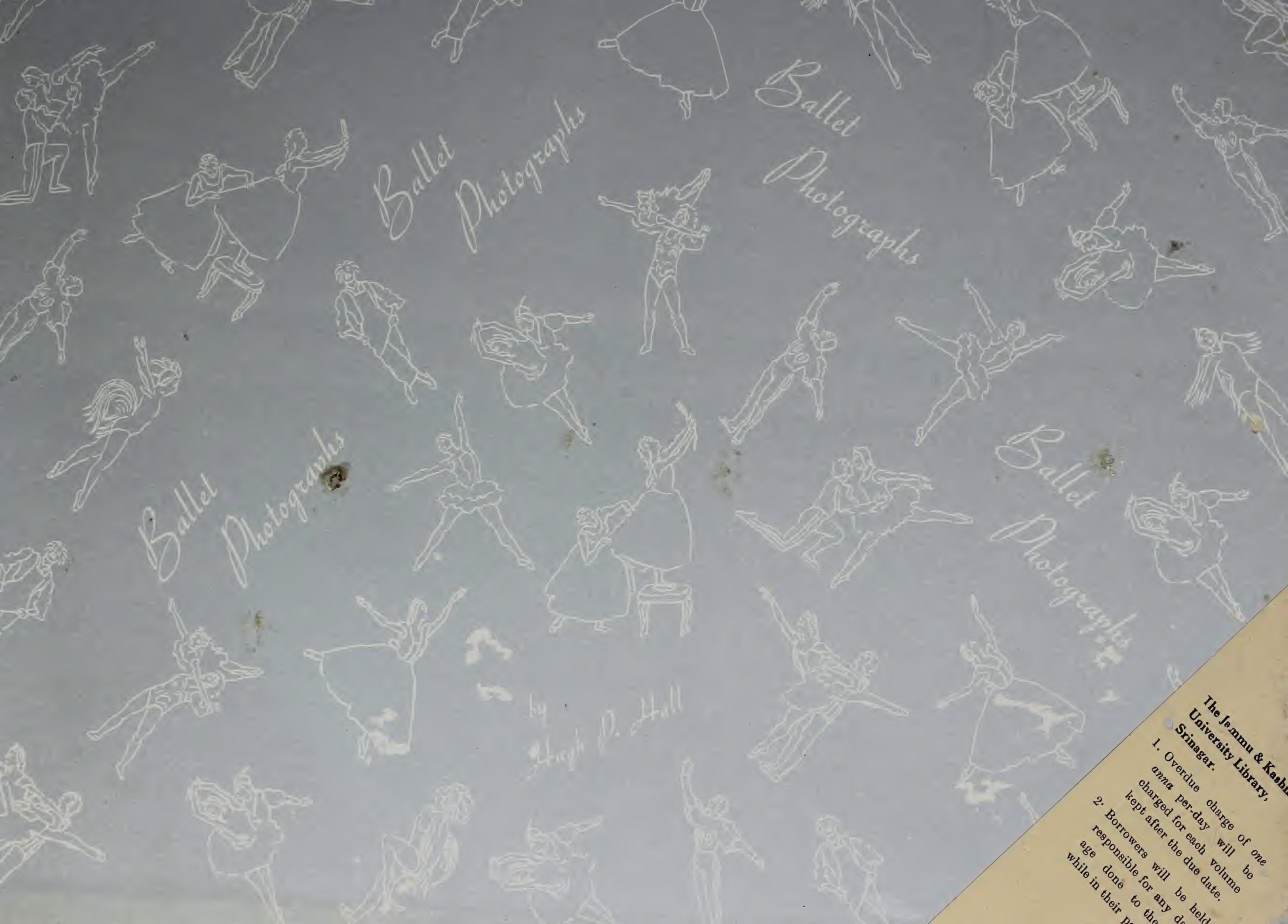
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